

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

No. 1225. — November 23, 1867.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
1. Memoir and Letters of Miss Edgeworth	<i>Edinburgh Review</i> , 451
2. The French Retreat from Moscow	<i>Quarterly Review</i> , 473
3. Bishop Lonsdale	<i>Spectator</i> , 497
4. Florence and Italy	<i>Il Diritto</i> , 498
5. The Occupations of a Retired Life. By Edward Garrett	<i>Sunday Magazine</i> , 499
6. "A New Biographical Dictionary"	<i>London Review</i> , 511

SHORT ARTICLE: A Curiosity in Literature, 498.

POETRY: Song of the Horse, 450. Sea Music, 450. Twenty Years, 450.

New Books —

THE SEXTON'S TALE, AND OTHER POEMS. By Theodore Tilton. Sheldon & Co.: New York.

WAITING FOR THE VERDICT. By Mrs. R. H. Davis. Sheldon & Co.: New York.

LEYTON HALL. By Mark Lemon. T. B. Peterson & Brothers: Philadelphia.

Preparing for Publication at this Office —

THE CHAPLET OF PEARLS. By the author of "Heir of Redclyffe."

REALMAH. By the author of "Friends in Council."

THE BROWNLOWS. By Mrs. Oliphant.

LINDA TRESSEL. By the author of "Nina Balatka."

THE BRAMLEIGHS OF BISHOP'S FOLLY. By Charles Lever.

GRACE'S FORTUNE.

ALL FOR GREED.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER. By W. Trollope.

OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE. By Edward Garrett.

A SEABOARD PARISH. By George McDonald.

PEEP INTO A WESTPHALIAN PARSONAGE.

Just Published at this Office —

THE TENANTS OF MALORY. By J. S. Le Fanu. 50 cents.

OLD SIR DOUGLAS. By the Hon. Mrs. Norton. 75 cents.

SIR BROOK FOSSBROOKE. New Edition.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY

LITTELL & GAY, BOSTON.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

FOR EIGHT DOLLARS, remitted directly to the Publishers, the Living Age will be punctually forwarded for a year, free of postage. But we do not prepay postage on less than a year; nor where we have to pay a commission for forwarding the money.

Price of the First Series, in Cloth, 36 volumes, 90 dollars.

Second " " 20 " 50 "

Third " " 32 " 80 "

The Complete work 88 " 220 "

Any Volume Bound, 3 dollars; Unbound, 2 dollars. The sets, or volumes, will be sent at the expense of the publishers.

THE SONG OF THE HORSE.

A poor old stage-horse, lank and thin,
Not much else than bones and skin,
I jog along, week out, week in,
Kicked, and cursed, and meanly fed,
Jammed in the side and jerked by the head —
And the thing I can't at all make out
Is, what on earth it's all about.

Why was I made to toil and tug
For this odd little human bug,
Two-legged, dumpy as a jug,
Who sits aloft my ribs to batter —
Or why was *he* made, for that matter?
And, if I needs must be created,
Why is it that I was not fated
To prance and curvet, finely mated,
Silver-harnessed, sleek and fat,
With groom and blanket, and all that?

Here I go, day after day,
Pounding and slipping down Broadway,
Dragging these curious biped things,
With fore-legs gone, and yet no wings —
Where they all go to I don't know,
Nor why in the world they hurry so,
Nor what good use heaven puts them to!

It wasn't my fault, you see, at all,
That my joints grew big, and my muscles small,
And so I missed of a rich man's stall.
Im clumsy, crooked, stupid, slow,
Yet the meanest horse is a horse, you know,
And his ribs can ache with the kick or blow,
As well as the glossiest nags that go.
O, Lord, how long will they use me so?
And when may the equine spirit go
Where glorified horses stand in a row,
Switching their bright tails to and fro,
Careless of either wheel or whoa —
Where oats are always *apropos*,
And flies don't grow —
Oh, no!
O!

SEA MUSIC.

BY EDMUND TROVOLD.

The grey unresting sea,
Adown the bright and belting shore,
Breaking in untold melody,
Makes music evermore.

Centuries of vanished time,
Since the glad earth's primeval morn,
Have heard the grand unpausing chime,
Momentarily aye new-born.

Like as in cloistered piles,
Rich bursts of massive sound upswell,
Ringing along dim-lighted aisles
With spirit-trancing spell.

So on the surf-white strand,
Chants of deep peal the sea-waves raise,
Like voices from a viewless land,
Hymning a hymn of praise.

By times, in thunder notes,
The booming billows shoreward surge;
By times, a silver laugh inflates;
By times, a low, soft dirge.

Souls more ennobled grow,
Listing the wordless anthem rise:
Discords are drowned in that great flow
Of Nature's harmonies.

Men change, and "cease to be,"
And empires rise and grow and fall;
But the weird music of the sea
Lives, and outlives them all.

That mystic song shall last
Till Time itself no more shall be:
Till seas and shores away have passed,
Lost in eternity.

TWENTY YEARS.

She nears the land — the boat that brings
My wand'ring boy again to me;
The sturdy rowers lend her wings,
And now each sunburnt face I see.
Among them all I marked not him —
It is not that with rising tears
My watchful eyes are weak and dim;
It is the lapse of twenty years.

He left me when a little lad,
A lad! a babe; I see him now,
I hear his voice so frank and glad,
I stroke the curls upon his brow.
My son returns across the main,
But brings not back the time that's fled;
I shall not hear the voice again,
I shall not pat the childish head.

Perhaps a trace I yet may find
Of boyhood in his look or tone;
A glance — an accent to remind
Me still of hopeful visions gone.
His mother's smile may greet me, when
We hold each other hand in hand,
His mother's voice may echo then
A blessing from the spirit land.

The boat comes on; a minute more
She'll grate upon the beach. And see,
Who rises now to spring on shore?
Who waves his cap aloft? 'Tis he.
No more I look in wistful doubt,
As in the man the child appears;
His earnest gaze, his joyful shout,
Have bridged the lapse of twenty years.

From The Edinburgh Review.

A Memoir of Maria Edgeworth, with a Selection from her Letters. By the late Mrs. EDGEWORTH, edited by her Children. Not published. In 3 vols. 1867.

WE are afraid of appealing so confidently to the present generation, but are there any survivors of the last who do not habitually associate the name of Maria Edgeworth with a variety of agreeable recollections? — with scenes, images, and characters which were the delight of their youth — with the choicest specimens of that school of fiction in which amusement is blended with utility, and the understanding is addressed simultaneously with the fancy and the heart? All these, and they must still be many, will be rejoiced to hear that a Memoir has recently been printed (though it is as yet unpublished) which may enable them to watch the everyday life of their old favourite, to peep into the innermost folds of her mind, to track her genius to its source, to mark the growth of her powers, and fix how much was the gift of nature and how much the product of cultivation or of art. For ourselves, we were led by it at once to a reperusal of her works; and so satisfactory was the result, that we can confidently recommend a fresh or first trial of them to novel-readers of all ages, who are not utterly spoiled by Miss Braddon and Mrs. Wood.

There is another reason for reverting to Miss Edgeworth's writings with unabated interest, independently of their attractiveness. They contributed, more than any others that can be named, towards the inauguration of that splendid era of romance which began and reached its full effulgence with the author of 'Waverley.' In the General Preface to the collected edition of the Novels, after alluding to the two circumstances which led him to this style of composition, Scott says: 'The first was the extended and well-merited fame of Miss Edgeworth, whose Irish characters have gone so far to make the English familiar with the character of their gay and kind-hearted neighbours of Ireland, that she may be truly said to have done more towards completing the Union than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up. Without being so presumptuous as to hope to emulate the rich humour, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact, which pervade the works of my accomplished friend, I felt that something might be attempted for my own coun-

try of the same kind with that which she has so fortunately achieved for Ireland.'

Luckily for her father, and not unluckily for Miss Edgeworth, their lives and labours are so blended and intertwined, that her name and memory cannot be separated from his. They were connected by ties stronger than ties of blood — by community of objects, habits, affections, and modes of thought. He had plausible claims to the title of her literary parent. He divined the natural bent of her genius, and aided without forcing its development. He gave her the most bracing kind of education, moral and intellectual; the groundwork being scrupulous accuracy of statement, patient observation, frankness, self-knowledge, and self-respect. He made her from early girlhood his companion and friend. He read with her, wrote with her, came before an applauding public hand-in-hand with her, and (we really believe unconsciously) traded on her. The best description of him in advanced years is given by Lord Byron:

"I have been reading the Life by himself and daughter of Mr. R. L. Edgeworth, the father of the Miss Edgeworth. It is altogether a great name. In 1813 I recollect to have met them in the fashionable world of London, in the assemblies of the hour, and at a breakfast of Sir Humphry and Lady Davy's, to which I was invited for the nonce. I had been the lion of 1812: Miss Edgeworth and Madame de Staël, with the Cossack, towards the end of 1813, were the exhibitions of the succeeding year. I thought Edgeworth a fine old fellow of a clarety, elderly, red complexion, but active, brisk and endless. He was seventy but did not look fifty — no, nor forty-eight even. I had seen poor Fitzpatrick not very long before — a man of pleasure, wit, eloquence, all things. He tottered — but still talked like a gentleman, though feebly. Edgeworth bounced about, and talked loud and long, but he seemed neither weakly nor decrepit, and hardly old.

He was not much admired in London, and I remember a 'ryght merrie' and conceited jest which was rife among the gallants of the day — viz. a paper had been presented for the recall of Mrs. Siddons to the stage, to which all men had been called to subscribe. Whereupon Thomas Moore, of profane and poetical memory, did propose that a similar paper should be subscribed and circumscribed for the recall of Mr. Edgeworth to Ireland. The fact was everybody cared more about her. She was a nice little unassuming 'Jeannie-Deans-looking-body,' as we Scotch say; and if not handsome, certainly not ill-looking. Her conversation was as quiet as herself. One would never have guessed she could write her name; whereas her father talked, not as if he could write

nothing else, but as if nothing else was worth writing."

Moore denies all participation in the "ryghte merrie jest." But Lord Byron himself is said to have proposed a Society for the Suppression of Edgeworth. The efforts of such an institution would have proved as unavailing as those of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. Edgeworth was insuppressible; and, take him for all in all, he was not a man whom it was proper or expedient to suppress. With the simple change of gender, we might apply to him what Talleyrand said of Madame de Staël: "*Elle est vraiment insupportable*;" which he qualified after a short pause by, "*c'est son seul défaut*." Edgeworth was a useful, an excellent man in many ways; although, like many useful and excellent men, a bore of the first magnitude. He was a patriot, a philanthropist, a good landlord, a good magistrate, a good husband, and (what is most to our present purpose) a good father.

The Edgeworths, of Edgeworth-Town, County Longford, were a family of considerable local distinction, who came into Ireland in the reign of Elizabeth. Their settlement there is clearly traced to Edward Edgeworth, bishop of Down and Connor, in 1593, who, dying without issue, left his fortune to his brother, Francis, in 1619. In the way of historical illustration, they boast of a Lady Edgeworth, a woman of extraordinary beauty and courage, who, in consequence of the gallant attentions of Charles II. at her presentation, refused to attend his court a second time, and afterwards gave an instance of presence of mind which equals or surpasses the Victoria-cross exploit of flinging a lighted shell out of a trench. On some sudden alarm at her husband's Irish castle of Lissard, she hurried to a garret for gunpowder, followed by a maid-servant carrying a candle without a candlestick. When the lady had taken what she wanted from the barrel, had locked the door, and was half way down the stairs again, she observed that the girl had left the candle, and asked her what she had done with it. She had left it "stuck in the barrel of black salt." Lady Edgeworth returned by herself to the garret, put her hand carefully underneath the candle, and carried it safely out.

Richard Lovell Edgeworth, the lineal descendant of Francis, and the representative of the family when we take it up, was born at Bath in 1744. His maternal grandfather was a Welsh judge, named Lovell,

of whom it is related that, travelling over the sands at Beaumaris as he was going circuit, he was overtaken by the tide: the coach stuck fast in a quicksand; the water rose rapidly, and the registrar, who had crept out of the window and taken refuge on the coach-box, whilst the servants clustered on the roof, earnestly entreated the judge to do the same. With the water nearly touching his lips he gravely replied: "I will follow your counsel if you can quote any precedent for a judge's mounting a coach-box."

It must be admitted that a man so descended had an hereditary right to firmness of nerve and eccentricity, and Edgeworth did not allow the right to fall into abeyance from disuse. He is reported to have said: "I am not a man of prejudice: I have had four wives; the second and third were sisters; and I was in love with the second in the lifetime of the first." The first was Anna Maria, daughter of Paul Elers, Esq., of Black Bourton, in Oxfordshire, by whom he had Maria and a son. The second and third were Honora and Elizabeth Sneyd. The fourth, Miss Beaufort, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Beaufort and sister of the late Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort, is the author of the Memoir, edited by her children. The book is remarkably well written and edited; and, with a few slight omissions and alterations, might be laid before the public in the full confidence that the reputation of every one concerned, whether dead or living, would be confirmed or raised by it. The selections from the letters are peculiarly valuable, as well from the spirited descriptions, curious anecdotes, and sound remarks on things and people, as from the light they throw on Miss Edgeworth's life, character, and writings; and, it being doubtful whether they will ever be made generally accessible, we propose (by permission) to quote liberally from them.

Maria (born January 1, 1767) had only just attained her sixth year when her mother died, and she just remembered being taken to the death-bed for a last farewell. Prior to this event, her childhood had been passed at Black Bourton, where she ran some risk of being spoiled by the fond indulgence of her aunts. After the lapse of a few months her mother's place was occupied by a step-mother, who exercised too important an influence on the embryo authoress to allow of her being unceremoniously introduced.

Honora Sneyd was the daughter of a younger son of Ralph Sneyd, Esq., of Bishton, in Staffordshire. Her father hav-

ing become a widower in early life, she was bred up under the care of Mrs. Seward, with her sworn friend the famous Anna, and it was at Lichfield, in 1770, that Edgeworth first became acquainted with her, whilst on a visit to Day, the author of "Sandford and Merton." He has recorded his impressions in his Memoirs :

"During this intercourse, I perceived the superiority of Miss Honora Sneyd's capacity. Her memory was not copiously stored with poetry; and though no way deficient, her knowledge had not been much enlarged by books; but her sentiments were on all subjects so just, and were delivered with such blushing modesty (though not without an air of conscious worth), as to command attention from every one capable of appreciating female excellence. Her person was graceful, her features beautiful, and their expression such as to heighten the eloquence of everything she said. I was six-and-twenty; and now, for the first time in my life, I saw a woman that equalled the picture of perfection, which existed in my imagination. I had long suffered from the want of that cheerfulness in a wife, without which marriage could not be agreeable to a man of such a temper as mine. I had borne this evil, I believe, with patience; but my not being happy at home exposed me to the danger of being too happy elsewhere."

Miss Seward, in a note to her "Monody on the Death of Major André," asserts that, in a fit of despair at being jilted by this lady, André threw up his business as a merchant, entered the army, and met his untimely fate. Nor can we agree with Edgeworth that the assertion is satisfactorily refuted by the dates; for André's first commission was dated March 4th, 1771, prior to her marriage, but not necessarily prior to her rejection of his suit. He was certainly deeply attached to her; and so was Day, who wrote her an argumentative proposal comprised in several sheets of paper, to which she wrote an equally long and argumentative refusal. The pith of his reasoning was that the best thing for her would be to live with him secluded from what is called the world; the pith of her reply being that she would rather live in it. On receiving this reply he took to his bed, and was profusely bled by his friend Dr. Darwin; but speedily thought better of the matter, got up, rejoined the circle, and fell in love with her sister.

A stranger or more amusing set of people than were then collected at Lichfield it would be no easy matter to light upon; but they were people of principle, and in the midst of their own weaknesses could give

one another good advice upon a pinch. Edgeworth tells us that Day could not see more plainly than himself the imprudence and folly of becoming too fond of an object which he could not hope to obtain. "With all the eloquence of virtue and of friendship, he represented to me the danger, the criminality, of such an attachment. I knew that there is but one certain method of ending such dangers—*flight*." He resolved to go abroad, and Day determined to go abroad too, with the view of devoting a large portion of his time to the acquirement of those accomplishments (riding, dancing, fencing, &c.) which he had formerly treated with sovereign contempt. "Miss Elizabeth Sneyd had convinced him that he could not with propriety abase or ridicule talents in which he appeared obviously deficient." As we are speaking of another future step-mother, it is hardly a digression to add that "on her part she promised not to go to London, Bath, or any public place of amusement, till his return; and she engaged with alacrity to prosecute an excellent course of reading, which they had agreed upon before his departure."

Abroad they went, and made Lyons their head-quarters for nearly two years, Edgeworth having undertaken to construct a new kind of ferry-boat across the Rhone and a bridge for wheelbarrows over a ravine. Mrs. Edgeworth, number one, joined him there; and as at the end of some months she returned at her own earnest request to England to be confined, she had small reason to complain of neglect, nor does she anywhere appear to have been disturbed by jealousy of a rival or successor. He distinctly states that he steadily adhered to the resolution he had formed on leaving England, never to keep up the slightest intercourse with the object of his irregular affection by letter, message, or inquiry. Mrs. Edgeworth died in childbirth, March 1773, and he instantly started for England, where he met Day. The first words Day said to him were, "Have you heard anything of Honora Sneyd?" On being answered in the negative, Day resumed: "My dear friend, while virtue and honour forbade you to think of her, I did everything in my power to separate you; but now that you are both at liberty, I have used the utmost expedition to reach you on your arrival in England, that I might be the first to tell you that Honora is in perfect health and beauty; improved in person and in mind, and, though surrounded by lovers, still her own mistress."

We cannot help suspecting that the fascinating Honora had an instinctive prescience

of coming events, and that her heart was not altogether unoccupied when she transferred Day to her sister, and unwittingly hurried poor André to his fate. Neither do we put implicit faith in the widowed suitor's confusion and unconsciousness at their first meeting, when he avers: "I have been told, that the last person whom I addressed or saw, when I came into the room, was Honora Sneyd. This I do not remember; but I am perfectly sure that, when I did see her, she appeared to me most lovely, even more lovely then when we parted. What her sentiments might be it was impossible to divine. My addresses were, after some time, permitted and approved; and, with the consent of her father, Miss Honora Sneyd and I were married (1773) by special license, in the ladies' choir, in the Cathedral at Lichfield."

They were married on the 17th July; a rather hasty proceeding, unless there is an error of a year, which would make the period of probation improbably long. Immediately after the ceremony they went to Ireland; and here the narrative is taken up in the second page of the Memoir:

"On Mr. Edgeworth's marriage with Honora Sneyd, Maria accompanied them to Ireland. Of this visit she recollected very little, except that she was a mischievous child, amusing herself once at her aunt Fox's when the company were unmindful of her, cutting out the squares in a checked sofa cover, and one day trampling through a number of hot-bed frames that had just been glazed, laid on the grass before the door at Edgeworth-Town. She recollected her delight at the crashing of the glass, but, immorally, did not remember either cutting her feet or how she was punished for this performance."

Her step-mother was to her all that the most affectionate mother could have been, and had the happy art of inspiring perfect confidence along with a degree of admiration approaching to awe. "The surpassing beauty of her presence struck Maria, young as she was, at their first acquaintance: she remembered standing by her dressing table, and looking up at her with a sudden feeling of How beautiful!" This estimable lady's health unfortunately began to fail in 1778, and Maria, then in her eighth year, was placed at school at Derby with a Mrs. Latafiere, who was always kindly remembered by her pupil, although the writing-master of this establishment earned the most lasting title to her gratitude and that of her correspondents by teaching her to write the beautiful hand which she retained to the end of her life. She said that, on the first day of

her entrance in the school-room, she felt more admiration for a child, less than herself, repeating the nine parts of speech than she ever felt afterwards for any effort of human genius.

The first of the printed letters from Edgeworth to his daughter is dated April 6th, 1780, and the method he pursued with her may be collected from it: "It would be very agreeable to me, my dear Maria, to have letters from you familiarly: I wish to know what you like and what you dislike: I wish to communicate to you what little knowledge I have acquired, that you may have a tincture of every species of literature, and form your taste by choice and not by chance." The same tone is taken in the only printed letter from Mrs. Honora Edgeworth to her daughter-in-law dated October 10, 1779, in which, after impressing that it is "in vain to attempt to please a person who will not tell us what they do and what they do not desire," she continues: "It is very agreeable to me to think of conversing with you as my equal in every respect but age, and of my making that inequality of use to you, by giving you the advantage of the experience I have had, and the observations I have been able to make, as these are parts of knowledge which nothing but time can bestow." On May 2, 1780, Edgeworth writes:—

'My dear Daughter,—At six o'clock on Sunday morning your excellent mother expired in my arms. She now lies dead beside me, and I know I am doing what would give her pleasure, if she were capable of feeling anything, by writing to you at this time to fix her excellent image in your mind. . . . Continue, my dear daughter, the desire which you feel of becoming amiable, prudent, and of use. The ornamental parts of a character, with such an understanding as yours, necessarily ensue: but true judgment and sagacity in the choice of friends and the regulation of your behaviour can be had only from reflection and from being thoroughly convinced of what experience teaches in general too late, that to be happy we must be good.

'God bless you, and make you ambitious of that valuable praise which the amiable character of your dear mother forces from the virtuous and the wise. My writing to you in my present situation will, my dearest daughter, be remembered by you as the strongest proof of the love of your approving and affectionate father.'

At one of the Provençal Courts of Love in the thirteenth century the question was argued whether a second marriage by man or woman be or be not complimentary to the deceased partner in the first. Edgeworth had no hesitation in deciding this

question in the affirmative, backed as he was by the authority of his second wife. She enjoined him on her death-bed to marry her sister, Elizabeth, who had hung over Day after he had undergone a regular gymnastic training for her sake:

"Nothing is more erroneous than the common belief, that a man, who has lived in the greatest happiness with one wife, will be the most averse to take another. On the contrary, the loss of happiness, which he feels when he loses her, necessarily urges him to endeavour to be again placed in a situation, which had constituted his former felicity.

"I felt that Honora had judged wisely, and from a thorough knowledge of my character, when she had advised me to marry again, as soon as I could meet with a woman who would make a good mother to my children and an agreeable companion to me. She had formed an idea, that her sister Elizabeth was better suited to me than any other woman; and thought that I was equally well suited to her. Of all Honora's sisters I had seen the least of Elizabeth."

If ever there were such things as marriages made in heaven, three of Edgeworth's might be so described, for they were extremely happy marriages, although the circumstances under which they were brought about were irreconcilable with all ordinary rules and probabilities. Elizabeth Sneyd, when the successorship was first proposed by her dying sister, revolted at it; "Not only," observes Edgeworth, "because I was her sister's husband, and because she had another attachment"—pretty strong grounds in the common mundane point of view—"but, independently of these circumstances, as she distinctly said, I was the last man of her acquaintance that she should have thought of for a husband; and certainly, notwithstanding her beauty, abilities, and polished manners, I believed she was as little suited to me." But there's a divinity that shapes our ends: the two negatives made an affirmative: the antipathy grew into sympathy: the other attachment was shaken off: the religious scruple was got over: and one fine morning in the December of 1780, the year in which Honora died, the widower and the sister of his deceased wife met to be married in the parish church of Scarborough. At this critical point there was a hitch. The clergyman was so alarmed by a letter "as to make it cruel to press him to perform the ceremony." So the couple separated. The bride expectant started with her friend, Lady Holte, for Bath; the bridegroom hurried to London with his children, took lodgings in Gray's Inn, and had the

banns published three times in St. Andrew's Church, Holborn. When all was ready for a second trial, she came from Bath, "and on Christmas Day, 1780, was married to me in the presence of my first wife's brother, Mr. Elers, his lady, and Mr Day—just the very last people we should have expected to see at the celebration. It will be remembered that, prior to the Statute of 5 and 6 William IV. c. 64, marriages within the Levitical degrees were voidable, not void, and if not invalidated during the lifetime of both parties, held good to all intents and purposes.

Neither the death of Honora, nor the courtship of Elizabeth with its embarrassments, appears to have diminished the care with which Edgeworth watched over the mental training of his daughter; for on May 25, 1780, he writes from Lichfield:—

"I also beg that you will send me a tale about the length of a 'Spectator,' upon the subject of Generosity; it must be taken from history or romance, and must be sent the day se'nnight after you receive this, and I beg you will take some pains about it.

"The same subject (we are informed in the Memoir) was given at the same time to a young gentleman from Oxford, then at Lichfield. When the two stories were completed, they were given to Mr William Sneyd, Mr. Edgeworth's brother-in-law, to decide on their merits; he pronounced Maria's to be very much the best: 'an excellent story, and extremely well written; but where's the Generosity?' A saying which became a sort of proverb with her afterwards. It was Maria's first story; but it has not been preserved; she used to say that there was in it a sentence of inextricable confusion between a saddle, a man, and his horse."

In the same year, 1780, she was removed from Mrs. Lataffiere's to the fashionable establishment of Mrs. Davis in Upper Wimpole Street. "Even in the midst of the embarrassment of the introduction to her new mistress, she was struck by the reflected effect in Mrs. Davis's countenance of her father's air and address when he brought her to the school." Whatever the effect of his air and address on others, he certainly contrived to impress wife after wife, and every one of his many children by each of them, with the conviction that he had not his equal upon earth. Mrs. Davis, it is stated, treated Maria with kindness and consideration, though she was neither beautiful nor fashionable, and gave her the full benefit of an invention for drawing out young ladies; which, we hope, died out with this establishment.

"Excellent masters were in attendance, and Maria went through all the usual tortures of back boards, iron collars, and dumbbells, with the unusual one of being swung by the neck to draw out the muscles and increase the growth, a signal failure in her case." Did it succeed in any case? There is a story of a wrynecked Prince of Condé falling in the hunting field, and coming to himself just in time to stop the peasants who picked him up in a well-intended effort to pull him straight; but the notion of pulling out a young lady like a telescope was surely peculiar to a "finishing" school. By a parity of reason they should be made to stand with weights on their heads when they are growing too fast.

An accomplished English nobleman who had been taking lessons in fencing during the whole of a prolonged visit in Paris, ventured on the eve of his departure to ask his instructor's opinion of his proficiency, which was given in these words: "*Milord, je vous conseille décidément d'abandonner les armes.*" We are not informed how long the analogous advice was similarly delayed to the wasting of Maria's time and her father's money, but she had so little taste for music that the music-master advised her to give up learning to play on the pianoforte. "He, however, underrated her powers of ear," remarks her third step-mother, "for when I knew her she enjoyed good music, and at Mrs. Davis's she learned to dance well, and liked it. She delighted to remember the pleasure she felt in the perfect time in which her companions executed a favourite dance of that day, Slingsby's Allemand." The probabilities are, notwithstanding, all in favour of the music-master who gives up a pupil; and an ear for time is not unfrequently deficient in the sensibility which constitutes a good ear for music. Miss Edgeworth was about upon a par with Jeremy in "Love for Love" in this respect: "Yes, I have a reasonable good ear, sir, as to jigs and country dances, and the like. I don't much matter your solos and sonatas."

On the other hand, she had a great facility for learning languages, and she found her Italian and French exercises so easy that she wrote off those given out for the whole quarter at once, keeping them strung together in her desk, and read for amusement whilst the other girls were labouring at their tasks. "Her favourite seat during playtime was under a high ebony cabinet which stood at one end of the schoolroom; and here she often remained so completely

absorbed by the book she was reading as to be perfectly deaf to all the noises around her, only occasionally startled into consciousness of it by some unusual uproar. This early habit of concentrated attention, perhaps inherent in minds of great genius, continued through life." It is so inherent, so inseparable, as to have been sometimes thought identical with genius; which Buffon defines a superior aptitude to patience. Another noteworthy trait of this period has been preserved. "She was remembered by her companions, both at Mrs. Lataffiere's and Mrs. Davis's, for her entertaining stories, and she learned with all the tact of an improvisatrice to know which story was most successful by the unmistakable evidence of her auditors' wakefulness, when she narrated at night for those who were in the bedroom with her.

She was taken from school in 1782, and went with her father and the rest of the family to Edgeworth-Town, which was her home for the remainder of her life. Her first impressions are fortunately set down in her continuation of her father's Memoirs:—

"I accompanied my father to Ireland. Before this time I had not, except during a few months of my childhood, ever been in that country; therefore everything there was new to me: and though I was then but *twelve years old*, and though such a length of time has since elapsed, I have retained a clear and strong recollection of our arrival at Edgeworth-Town.

"Things and persons are so much improved in Ireland of latter days, that only those who can remember how they were some thirty or forty years ago can conceive the variety of domestic grievances, which, in those times, assailed the master of a family, immediately upon his arrival at his Irish home. Wherever he turned his eyes, in or out of his house, damp, dilapidation, waste, appeared. Painting, glazing, roofing, fencing, finishing—all were wanting.

"The backyard, and even the front lawn round the windows of the house, were filled with loungers, followers, and petitioners; tenants, under tenants, drivers, subagent and agent, were to have audience; and they all had grievances and secret informations, accusations reciprocating, and quarrels each under each interminable."

She could never have been guilty of the weakness which the late Mr. Croker laboured so hard to fix on Madame d'Arblay; but she was undoubtedly in her sixteenth year in 1782, and both memoirs concur in fixing the permanent return to Ireland in that year. She continues:

"I was with him constantly, and I was amused and interested in seeing how he made his way through these complaints, petitions, and grievances, with decision and despatch; he, all the time, in good humour with the people, and they delighted with him; though he often 'rated them roundly,' when they stood before him perverse in litigation, helpless in procrastination, detected in cunning, or convicted of falsehood. They saw into his character, almost as soon as he understood theirs. The first remark which I heard whispered aside among the people, with congratulatory looks at each other, was — 'His honor, any way, is good pay.'

"It was said of the celebrated King of Prussia, that 'he scolded like a trooper, and paid like a prince.' Such a man would be liked in Ireland; but there is a higher description of character, which (give them but time to know it) the Irish would infinitely prefer. One who paid, not like a prince, but like a man of sense and humanity."

It is new to us that the celebrated King of Prussia paid like a prince. Even Mr. Carlyle has not endowed him with that merit; but we have no doubt that Mr. Edgeworth paid like a man of sense and humanity; and details enough are given by his daughter to prove that he resolutely pursued the precise course which a resident landlord should pursue, to remedy the worst evils of that unhappy country. He had no dealings with middlemen. He received his rents without the intervention of agent or sub-agent. He chose his tenants for their character. The sole claims to preference were industry, honesty, and sobriety. He resisted subdivision. He made no difference between Catholic and Protestant, Saxon and Celt; and his administration of justice grew into a proverb. Our immediate object, however, in referring to his domestic arrangements and way of life is to show how materials for the future novelist accumulated and were hived up:

"Some men live with their family, without letting them know their affairs; and however great may be their affection and esteem for their wives and children, think that they have nothing to do with business. — This was not my father's way of thinking. — On the contrary, not only his wife, but his children, knew all his affairs. Whatever business he had to do was done in the midst of his family, usually in the common sitting-room: so that we were intimately acquainted, not only with his general principles of conduct, but with the most minute details of their every-day application. I further enjoyed some peculiar advantages: — he kindly wished to give me habits of business; and for this purpose, allowed me during many years to

assist him in copying his letters of business, and in receiving his rents."

Within visiting distance of Edgeworth-Town was Pakenham Hall, the residence of Lord Longford, where a large family was growing up, including "Kitty Pakenham," the future Duchess of Wellington. Here Miss Edgeworth became acquainted with Mrs. Greville, the author of the "Ode to Indifference," and many other people of distinction. Another neighbouring house was Castle Forbes, the residence of the Earl of Granard, where a various and agreeable society assembled, especially when Lady Granard's mother, Lady Moira, was staying there. The times, again, were highly favourable for the observer who wished to see national characteristics called out and placed in broad relief. The stirring, exciting, elevating influence of the great Volunteer movement was in full operation during the early years of Miss Edgeworth's residence in Ireland; and she was in the thick of the rebellion in 1798. There is no reason to suppose, however, that either her father or herself foresaw the line of composition in which she was destined to win fame; and his principal care was that she should acquire clearness of thought and accuracy of expression.

In the autumn of 1782 she began at his suggestion to translate *Madame de Genlis's "Adèle et Théodore;"* and she had completed one volume, when Holcroft's translation appeared. The time spent on this work, we are told, was not regarded as misspent; it fixed her handwriting, and gave her "a readiness and choice of words which only translation reaches." Day, who had a horror of female authorship, was shocked at her having been permitted even to translate, and wrote a congratulatory letter to Edgeworth when the publication was prevented. It was from the recollection of his arguments (she states), and of her father's reply, that "Letters for Literary Ladies" were written nearly ten years afterwards. "They were not published, nor was anything of ours published, till some time after Mr. Day's death (in 1789). Though sensible that there was much prejudice mixed with his reasons, yet deference for his friend's judgment prevailed with my father, and made him dread for his daughter the name of authoress. Yet though publication was out of our thoughts, as subjects occurred, many essays and tales were written for private amusement." This delay was fortunate; it gave her powers time to ripen; she wrote

because her mind was full; and having been originally forced into the observance of the Horatian maxim — *nonumque prematur in annum* — she afterwards abided by it of her own free choice and at her father's suggestion. "He would sometimes advise me to lay by what was done for several months and turn my mind to something else, that we might look back at it afterwards with fresh eyes."

The peasant poet, Clare, touchingly alludes to the hard pressure which compels the writer for bread to "forestall the blighted harvest of the brain." But want is a more allowable, and not a more deleterious, stimulant than vanity, or that morbid longing for publicity which is now inundating us with trash; and if ladies and gentlemen who are eager to appear in print could only be advised to take example from Miss Edgeworth, they would save their friends an infinity of trouble and vexation, besides improving their own chances of success.

The first story, after the tale on "Generosity," which Maria wrote, was "The Bracelets," and some of the others now in the "Parents' Assistant" and "Early Lessons." "Dog Trusty and the Honest Boy," and the "Thief," were written at this time (1791). She used to write them on a slate, then read them out to her sisters, and if they were approved, she copied them. This is Mrs. Edgeworth's account in the Memoir, but her own gives her a larger and more miscellaneous set of judges. She says that her father called upon the whole family to hear and judge of all they were writing, and adds:

"Whenever I thought of writing anything, I always told him my first rough plans; and always, with the instinct of a good critic, he used to fix immediately upon that which would best answer the purpose. — 'Sketch that, and show it to me.' — These words, from the experience of his sagacity, never failed to inspire me with hope of success. It was then sketched. Sometimes, when I was fond of a particular part. I used to dilate on it in the sketch; but to this he always objected — 'I don't want any of your painting — none of your drapery! — I can imagine all that — let me see the bare skeleton.'"

We quote these passages because they have been unaccountably overlooked in appreciating the share which Edgeworth had in his daughter's writings and determining the extent to which she was indebted to him for her fame. We shall show in the proper place that the entire conception of her best known work must be credited to him.

Prior to 1791, the information is meagre, and there are only two letters from Maria; one to Miss Charlotte Sneyd, and one to Mrs. Ruxton (her paternal aunt), the first of a series which continued forty-two years. Dating from this period, her letters form the principal contents of the volumes. As already intimated, they are admirable; but like all family letters, not excepting those of Madame de Sévigné, they contain a good deal of matter which has no intrinsic worth, although forming an indispensable setting for the rest. The number of remarkable people she fell in with and commemorates from the earliest period is extraordinary. One of these, Dr. Darwin, must have won Edgeworth's heart at once by his definition of a fool: "A fool, Mr. Edgeworth, you know, is a man who never tried an experiment in his life." If, reversing this theory, we are to estimate a man's wisdom by the number of experiments he tried, the seven sages of Greece and the wise men from the East together would have been no match for her father. On March 9, 1792, she writes from Clifton, where she was on a visit to a married sister, Mrs. King:

"My father has just returned from Dr. Darwin's, where he has been nearly three weeks; they were extremely kind, and pressed him very much to take a house in or near Derby for the summer. He has been, as Dr. Darwin expressed it, 'breathing the breath of life into the brazen lungs of a clock,' which he had made at Edgeworth-Town as a present for him. He saw the first part of Dr. Darwin's 'Botanic Garden;' 900*l.* was what his bookseller gave him for the whole! On his return from Derby, my father spent a day with Mr. Kier, the great chemist, at Birmingham: he was speaking to him of the late discovery of fulminating silver, with which I suppose your ladyship is well acquainted, though it be new to Henry and me. A lady and gentleman went into a laboratory where a few grains of fulminating silver were lying in a mortar: the gentleman as he was talking happened to stir it with the end of his cane, which was tipped with iron, — the fulminating silver exploded instantly, and blew the lady, the gentleman, and the whole laboratory to pieces! Take care how you go into laboratories with gentlemen, unless they are like Sir Plume, skilled in the 'nice conduct' of their canes."

Her mode of pointing or capping a remark by a good story is one marked attraction of her letters:

"Anna was extremely sorry that she could not see you again before she left Ireland; but you will soon be in the same kingdom again, and that is one great point gained, as Mr. Weaver,

a travelling astronomical lecturer, who carried the universe about in a box, told us. 'Sir,' said he to my father, 'when you look at a map, do you know that the east is always on your right-hand, and the west on your left?' 'Yes,' replied my father, with a very modest look, 'I believe I do.' 'Well,' said the man of learning, 'that's one great point gained.'

She was at no time much given to sentimentality or to what is popularly understood by romance: "I had much rather (she writes in 1793) make a bargain with any one I loved, to read the same book with them at the same hour, than to look at the moon like Rousseau's famous lovers." Speaking of Carnarvon Castle, and the impression of sublimity made on her by its grandeur in decay, she naively adds: "I believe these old castles interest one by calling up ideas of past times, which are in such strange contrast with the present." Describing a large and gloomy apartment which she occupied at Bruges, she says: "I am sure Mrs. Radcliffe might have kept her heroine wandering about this room for six good pages. When we meet I will tell Margaret of the night Charlotte and I spent in this room, and the footsteps we heard creak—just a room and just a night to suit her taste."

The sober, sensible, rational view of love which she uniformly takes in her novels is expressed in a letter dated May 16, 1798, to Miss Beaufort, then on the point of becoming her third step-mother:—

"Amongst the many kindnesses my father has shown me, the greatest, I think, has been his permitting me to see his heart à découvert; and I have seen by your kind sincerity and his, that, in good and cultivated minds, love is no idle passion, but one that inspires useful and generous energy. I have been convinced by your example of what I was always inclined to believe, that the power of feeling affection is increased by the cultivation of the understanding. The wife of an Indian Yogii (if a Yogii be permitted to have a wife) might be a very affectionate woman, but her sympathy with her husband could not have a very extensive sphere. As his eyes are to be continually fixed upon the point of his nose, hers in duteous sympathy must squint in like manner; and if the perfection of his virtue be to sit so still that the birds (*vide* Sacontala) may unmolested build nests in his hair, his wife cannot better show her affection than by yielding her tresses to them with similar patient stupidity. Are there not European Yogiis, or men whose ideas do not go much further than *le bout du nez*? And how delightful it must be to be chained for better for worse to one of this species! I should guess—for I know nothing of the matter—that the courtship of an ignorant lover must be

almost as insipid as a marriage with him; for 'my jewel' continually repeated, without new setting, must surely fatigue a little."

The same letter contains some excellent remarks on the manner in which familiarity and cordiality should be met, and due distinctions observed, in social or domestic relations:

"I flatter myself that you will find me gratefully exact *en belle fille*. I think there is a great deal of difference between that species of ceremony which exists with acquaintance, and that which should always exist with the best of friends: the one prevents the growth of affection, the other preserves it in youth and age. Many foolish people make fine plantations, and forget to fence them; so the young trees are destroyed by the young cattle, and the bark of the forest trees is sometimes injured. You need not, dear Miss Beaufort, fence yourself round with strong palings in this family, where all have been early accustomed to mind their boundaries. As for me, you see my intentions, or at least my theories, are good enough: if my practice be but half as good, you will be content, will you not? But theory was born in Brobdingnag, and practice in Lilliput. So much the better for me."

The rapidity with which Mr. Edgeworth's marriages succeeded each other was not the least remarkable circumstance connected with them; and although there is no evidence to justify the presumption, his ill-wishers may be pardoned for suspecting that he did not invariably observe the maxim. "'Tis good to be off with the old love (or wife) before you are on with the new." His third wife died in November, 1797; and he was married to the fourth in May 1798, the ceremony being performed by her brother, the Rev. William Beaufort. The time was curiously chosen, for the rebellion had broken out, and their wedding-trip, to Edgeworth-Town, lay through the disturbed districts. One of the objects that sorely tried the nerves of the bride was an improvised gallows in the shape of a car standing on end, with the shafts in the air, and a man hanging between them.

An eminent critic (in the "Quarterly Review") accused Miss Edgeworth of indelicacy in so readily sanctioning her father's marriages, and transferring her dutiful affections at his bidding. That she did so is extraordinary, but not necessarily wrong. With regard to the last, she states that it was not till 1798, after the third wife's death, during a visit of the Beaufort family at Edgeworth-Town, that he formed the attachment to Miss Beaufort:—

"When I first knew of this attachment, and before I was well acquainted with her, I own I did not wish for the marriage. I had not my father's quick penetration into character: I did not at first see the superior abilities or qualities which he discovered; nor did I anticipate any of the happy consequences from this union which he foresaw. All that I thought, I told him. With the most kind patience he bore with me, and instead of withdrawing his affection, honoured me the more with his confidence."

All resistance and repugnance were overcome by his eloquence or pertinacity, and he closes a letter to Day about a bust, the upas tree, frogs, agriculture, a heating apparatus, and a speaking machine, with this passage:

"And now for my piece of news, which I have kept for the last. I am going to be married to a young lady of small fortune and large accomplishments,—compared with my age, much youth (not quite 30), and more prudence—some beauty, more sense—uncommon talents, more uncommon temper,—liked by my family, loved by me. If I can say all this three years hence, shall not I have been a fortunate, not to say a wise man?"

He was able to say it all at the end of three years and long afterwards; he was a fortunate man, and (if the judicious adaptation of means to the grand end of human life, happiness, be wisdom) a wise man. There is positively no accounting for his career without allowing him self-knowledge, keen insight into character, moral courage, and strong volition. He was open to conviction, but till he was convinced of the erroneousness of his opinion, he retained and acted on it. He never "complicated against his will," and he resolutely set all wise saws and modern instances at defiance when he had deliberately made up his mind upon a point.

In a letter from Edgeworth-Town, November 19th, 1798, we find:

"In the 'Monthly Review' for October there is this anecdote. After the King of Denmark, who was somewhat silly, had left Paris, a Frenchman, who was in company with the Danish ambassador, but did not know him, began to ridicule the king—'*Ma foi, il a une tête une tête*'—'*Couronnée*,' replied the ambassador, with presence of mind and politeness. My father, who was much delighted with this answer, asked Lovell, Henry, and Sneyd, without telling the right answer, what they would have said:

Lovell: 'A head—and a heart, sir.'

Henry: 'A Head—upon his shoulders.'

Sneyd: 'A Head—of a king.'

Tell me which answer you like best. Richard will take your 'Practical Education' to you."

"Practical Education," so runs the comment in the Memoir, "was published this year (1798), and was praised and abused enough to render the authors immediately famous." It was praised in the "Monthly Review," which devoted two long articles to a careful analysis of the contents. These were of the most miscellaneous description, and include everything that can affect the mental or physical training of a reasonable being. It was abused in the "British Critic" on religious grounds: "Here, readers, is education *à la mode* in the true style of modern philosophy; nearly eight hundred quarto pages on practical education, and not a word on God, religion, Christianity, or a hint that such topics are ever to be mentioned." This indignant ultra-Christian might just as well have asserted that there was not a word on courage and chastity, or a hint that such things are ever to be mentioned:

"On religion and politics (they say in their preface) we have been silent, because we have no ambition to gain partisans or to make proselytes. The scrutinising eye of criticism, in looking over our table of contents, will also probably observe that there are no chapters on courage and chastity. To pretend to teach courage to Britons would be as ridiculous as it is unnecessary; and except to those who are exposed to the contagion of foreign manners, we may boast of the superior delicacy of our fair countrywomen."

Here Edgeworth stands confessed. Their respective shares in the work are stated in the preface. All that relates to the art of teaching to read in the chapter on tasks, the chapters on grammar and classical literature, geography, chronology, arithmetic, geometry, and mechanics, were written by the father, and the rest of the book (more than two-thirds) by the daughter.

Although the name of Edgeworth first acquired literary notoriety by "Practical Education," she had already been twice before the public in her own name and on her own account. "Letters for Literary Ladies" was published in 1795, and the "Parent's Assistant" in 1796. Writing to her cousin, Miss Ruxton, she says:—"I

beg, dear Sophy, that you will not call my little stories by the sublime title of my works: I shall else be ashamed when the little mouse comes forth. The stories are printed and bound the same size as 'Evenings at Home,' and I am afraid you will dislike the title; my father had sent the 'Parent's Friend,' but Mr. Johnson (the publisher) has degraded it into the 'Parent's Assistant' (which I dislike particularly) from association with an old book of arithmetic called the 'Tutor's Assistant.' She first struck into her peculiar vein in "Castle Rackrent" (1800), in which the habits and manners of that strange variety of the species, the Irish landlord of the eighteenth century, are depicted to the life. The first edition was published without her name, and the first notice of it in the Memoir runs:—"In 1801 a second edition of 'Castle Rackrent' was published by Maria Edgeworth, and its success was so triumphant that some one—I heard his name at the time, but do not now remember it—not only asserted that he was the author, but actually took the trouble to copy out several pages with corrections and erasures as if it was his original MS." In November, 1802, Miss Edgeworth writes from Paris—"Castle Rackrent" has been translated into German, and we saw in a French book an extract from it, giving the wake, the confinement of Lady Cathcart, and *sweeping the stairs with the wig*, as common and universal occurrences in that extraordinary kingdom." Swift's ironical proposal to relieve the Irish poor by converting their children into food for the rich, was seriously adduced by a French writer to illustrate the horrid extremities to which the country had been reduced.

"Belinda" was published in 1801, and was highly popular. "Moral Tales" was also published in 1801, with a preface by her father, in which he explains that the tales have been written by her to illustrate the opinions delivered in "Practical Education," and describes the moral object of each—the most effective mode of repelling readers that could well be contrived by an admiring parent. The "Essay on Irish Bulls" was published in 1802, in their joint names, and was reviewed in this Journal by Sydney Smith. Of course he could not resist the temptation of quizzing Edgeworth, whom, for that purpose, he insists on treating as the chief, if not sole, partner in the firm of Edgeworth & Co.; but whilst condemning the rambling style of the composition, his criticism is favourable. "The firm drew tears from us in the stories of Little

Dominick and of the Irish Beggar who killed his sweetheart. Never was grief more natural or more simple." Her own account of this book cannot be passed over:

"After 'Practical Education,' the next book which we published in partnership was the 'Essay on Irish Bulls.' The first design of this Essay was his:—under the semblance of attack, he wished to show the English public the eloquence, wit, and talents of the lower classes of people in Ireland. Working zealously upon the ideas which he suggested, sometimes, what was spoken by him, was afterwards written by me; or when I wrote my first thoughts, they were corrected and improved by him; so that no book was ever written more completely in partnership.

"On this, as on most subjects, whether light or serious, when we wrote together, it would now be difficult, almost impossible, to recollect which thoughts originally were his, and which were mine. All passages, in which there are Latin quotations or classical allusions, must be his exclusively, because I am entirely ignorant of the learned languages. The notes on the Dublin shoe-black's metaphorical language, I recollect, are chiefly his.

"I have heard him tell that story with all the natural, indescribable Irish tones and gestures, of which written language can give but a faint idea. He excelled in imitating the Irish because he never overstepped the modesty or the assurance of nature. He marked exquisitely the happy confidence, the shrewd wit, of the people, without condescending to produce effect by caricature."

The speech (she adds) of the poor freeholder to a candidate, in the chapter entitled "Irish wit and Eloquence," was made to her father, and written down by her within a few hours from his dictation. In the same chapter are the complaint of the poor widow against her landlord, and his reply, quoted in Campbell's "Lectures on Eloquence," under a notion that they were fictitious. She declares them to be unembellished facts: her father being the magistrate before whom the rival orators appeared.

Mrs. Edgeworth relates that a gentleman much interested in improving the breed of Irish cattle, sent, on seeing the advertisement, for the work on Irish bulls: "he was rather confounded by the appearance of the classical bull at the top of the first page which I had designed from a gem, and when he began to read the book he threw it away in disgust: he had purchased it as secretary to the Irish Agricultural Society."

In the autumn of 1802, during the peace of Amiens, Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth, their

two daughters and Maria, went to Paris, taking Belgium in their way. Her account of their travels is lively and sensible, and they appear to have known almost everybody worth knowing: Madame Récamier, Comte and Comtesse de Segur, La Harpe, Suard, Boissy d'Anglas, Montmorenci, Camille Jordan, Koscusko, and Lally Tollendal are specially mentioned. One long letter is entirely filled with a visit to Madame de Genlis, who is admirably described. But we can only afford room for Madame Oudinot, the Julie of Rousseau, with whom they breakfasted at the Abbé Marelle's:

"Julie is now seventy-two years of age, a thin woman in a little black bonnet: she appeared to me shockingly ugly; she squints so much that it is impossible to tell which way she is looking: but no sooner did I hear her speak than I began to like her; and no sooner was I seated beside her, than I began to find in her countenance a most benevolent and agreeable expression. She entered into conversation immediately: her manner invited and could not fail to obtain confidence. She seems as gay and open-hearted as a girl of seventeen. It has been said of her that she not only never did any harm, but never suspected any. . . . I wish I could at seventy-two be such a woman!"

"She told me that Rousseau, whilst he was writing so finely on education and leaving his own children in the Foundling Hospital, defended himself with so much eloquence that even those who blamed him in their hearts could not find tongues to answer him. Once at a dinner at Madame d'Oudinot's there was a fine pyramid of fruit. Rousseau in helping himself took the peach which formed the base of the pyramid, and the rest fell immediately. 'Rousseau,' said she, 'that is what you always do with all our systems, you pull down with a single touch, but who will build up what you pull down!' I asked if he was grateful for all the kindness shown to him? 'No; he was ungrateful: he had a thousand bad qualities, but I turned my attention from them to his genius and the good he had done mankind.'"

One sentence in her general estimate came upon us by surprise: "I have never heard any person talk of dress or fashions since we came to Paris, and very little scandal. A scandalmonger would be starved here."

The grand event of her—of every woman's—life came to pass at this period. On quitting Paris in March, 1803, she could say for the first time, *Ich habe gelebt und geliebet* (I have lived and loved). Abruptly closing her catalogue of new acquaintance, she adds:

"Here, my dear aunt, I was interrupted in a manner that will surprise you as much as it surprised me, by the coming in of Monsieur Edelcrantz, a Swedish gentleman, whom we have mentioned to you, of superior understanding and mild manners: he came to offer me his hand and heart!"

"My heart, you may suppose, cannot return his attachment, for I have seen but very little of him, and have not had time to have formed any judgment, except that I think nothing could tempt me to leave my own dear friends and my own country to live in Sweden."

In a letter to her cousin on 8th December, 1802 (the proposal was on the 1st), after explaining that M. Edelcrantz was bound to Sweden by ties of duty as strong as those which bound her to Edgeworth-Town, she writes: "This is all very reasonable, but reasonable for him only, not for me; and I have never felt anything for him but esteem and gratitude." Commenting on this passage, Mrs. Edgeworth says:

"Maria was mistaken as to her own feelings. She refused M. Edelcrantz, but she felt much more for him than esteem and admiration: she was extremely in love with him. Mr. Edgeworth left her to decide for herself; but she saw too plainly what it would be to us to lose her, and what she would feel at parting from us. She decided rightly for her own future happiness and for that of her family, but she suffered much at the time and long afterwards. While we were at Paris, I remember that in a shop where Charlotte and I were making some purchases, Maria sat apart absorbed in thought, and so deep in reverie, that when her father came in and stood opposite to her she did not see him till he spoke to her, when she started and burst into tears. . . . I do not think she repented of her refusal, or regretted her decision; she was well aware that she could not have made him happy, that she would not have suited his position at the Court of Stockholm, and that her want of beauty might have diminished his attachment. It was better perhaps that she should think so, as it calmed her mind, but from what I saw of M. Edelcrantz I think he was a man capable of really valuing her. I believe that he was much attached to her, and deeply mortified at her refusal. He continued to reside in Sweden after the abdication of his master, and was always distinguished for his high character and great abilities. He never married. He was, except very fine eyes, remarkably plain."

This is an interesting and instructive episode. It lets in a flood of light upon those passages of her writings which inculcate the stern control of the feelings,—the never-ceasing vigilance with which prudence and duty are to stand sentinel over the heart. So then, she had actually undergone

the hard trials she imposes and describes. They best can paint them who can feel them most. She was no Madame d'Aubray, with "ideas" of self-sacrifice admirably adapted for others' uses, but disagreeably unfitted for her own; and before setting down her precepts of self-command under temptation, she had tested them. Caroline Percy (in "Patronage") controlling her love for Count Altenberg is Maria Edgeworth subduing her love for the Chevalier Edelcrantz.

On the 27th January 1803, Edgeworth received a peremptory order from the French Government to quit Paris, and he went to Passy with his daughter, whilst his friends investigated the cause. It turned out to be a belief that he was the brother of the Abbé Edgeworth, who had attended Louis Seize on the scaffold. So soon as the exact degree of relationship was made known through Lord Whitworth, the order was withdrawn, but they received private information which induced them to leave France just time enough to get away. Lovell, the eldest son, was stopped on his journey from Geneva to Paris, and remained a *détenu* till the end of the war in 1814.

"After our return Maria immediately occupied herself with preparing for the press 'Popular Tales,' which were published this year (1803). She also began 'Émilie de Coulanges,' 'Madame de Fleury,' and 'Ennui,' and wrote 'Leonora,' with the romantic purpose I have already mentioned." The romantic purpose was to please the Chevalier Edelcrantz. It was written in the style he preferred; and "the idea of what he would think of it (says Mrs. Edgeworth) was, I believe, present to her in every page she wrote. She never heard that he had even read it." She also found time to write "Griselda" at odd moments in her own room.

"Popular Tales" appeared in 1804, with, as usual, a preface by the father, which might have been spared: e. g. "Burke supposes that there are eighty thousand readers in Great Britain, nearly one hundredth part of its inhabitants. Out of these we may calculate that ten thousand are nobility, clergy, or gentlemen of the learned professions. Of seventy thousand readers which remain, there are many who might be amused and instructed by books which were not professedly adapted to the classes which have been enumerated. With this view the following volumes have been composed." We can hardly think so, even on the paternal assurance. The heroes

and heroines do not belong to the nobility, clergy, or gentry, it is true. They are mostly farmers or tradespeople. Leonard Ludgate, in "Out of Debt out of Danger," is the only son and heir of a London haberdasher, who marries Miss Bella Perkins, a would-be fine lady.* But is this a reason why these tales should be less adapted, professedly or unprofessedly, to the upper ten thousand? Is the class of readers determined by the rank in life of the persons who figure in a novel? Do the nobility throw it aside disdainfully when they find that it does not deal with nobility, or do people of humble birth, or ungentle callings, lay it down with despair when it brings them face to face with a clergyman, a barrister, or a lord? Some such notion was obviously in Mr. Edgeworth's mind when he penned this preface.

The first series of "Tales of Fashionable Life," published in 1809, contained "Ennui," "Madame de Fleury," "The Dun," "Manœuvring," and "Almeria;" the second, published in 1812, "Vivian," "The Absentee," "Madame de Fleury," and "Émilie de Coulanges." "The Absentee" originally formed a part of "Patronage," where Lord and Lady Tipperary figured as patients of Dr. Percy; and "Patronage" was to have formed part of the second series of the Tales; but the impatience of the publisher induced her to lay aside "Patronage," and (with a change of name) fill the required space in the series with "The Absentee." "Patronage," published in 1813, had been long upon the stocks. Its history is narrated in her continuation of her father's Memoirs:

"Among others written many years ago, was one called 'the History of the Freeman Family.' In 1787, my father, to amuse Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth, when she was recovering after the birth of one of my brothers, related to us every evening, when we assembled in her room, part of this story, which I believe he invented as he went on. It was found so interesting by his audience, that they regretted much that it should not be preserved, and I in consequence began to write it from memory. The plan, founded on the story of two families, one making their way in the world by independent efforts, the other by mean arts, and by courting the great, was long afterwards the ground-work of 'Patronage.' The character of Lord Oldborough was added, but most of the others remained as my father originally described them: his hero and heroine were in greater

* It is a coincidence worth mentioning that the plot of this story is in parts identical with that of "Maison Neuve" a comedy, by M. Victorien Sardou, author of "La Famille Bénédict."

difficulties than mine, more in love, and consequently more interesting, and the whole story was infinitely more entertaining. I mention this, because some critics took it for granted, that he wrote parts of 'Patronage,' of which, in truth, he did not write, to the best of my recollection, any single passage; and it is remarkable, that they have ascribed to him all those faults, which were exclusively mine; the original design, which was really his, and which I altered, had all that merit of lively action and interest, in which mine has been found deficient."

It is recorded, in proof of the extent to which "Clarissa" had fastened on the public mind before the appearance of the concluding volumes, that Richardson received letter after letter passionately entreating him to spare the heroine the crowning misery, or, if that could not be, to reform Lovelace and marry him to his victim. Remonstrances of the same kind appear to have been addressed to the author of "Patronage" by tender-hearted readers, who could not bear to see Mr. Percy in prison, and were especially hurt by Caroline's refusal to go abroad with Count Altenberg. In the third edition (1815) these alleged blots were removed, although she had scrupulously touching material changes after the publication of a work. In a note to "The Contrast," she had said: "Those who wish to know the history of all the wedding clothes of the parties, may have their curiosity gratified by directing a line of inquiry, post paid, to the editor herself." Referring to the letters of inquiry thus invited, she writes:

"I have had another odd letter signed by three young ladies, *Clarissa Craven*, *Rachel Biddle*, and *Eliza Finch*, who, after sundry compliments in very pretty language, and with all the appearance of seriousness, beg that I will do them the favour to satisfy the curiosity they feel about the wedding dresses of the Frankland family in the 'Contrast.' I have answered in a way that will stand for either jest or earnest; I have said that at a sale of Admiral Tipsey's smuggled goods, Mrs. Hungerford bought French cambric muslin wedding gowns for the brides, the collars trimmed in the most becoming manner, as a Monmouth milliner assured me, with Valenciennes lace, from Admiral Tipsey's spoils. I have given all the particulars of the bridegroom's accoutrements, and signed myself the young ladies' 'obedient servant and perhaps dupe.'"

In May, 1813, the family paid a flying visit to London, and there is an admirable letter from her, filling between seven and eight pages, describing their reception in the best houses. On this and subsequent

occasions, she has been accused of an undue leaning to rank and fashion; but the fashionable world of her day included celebrities of all sorts — literary, scientific, artistic, and political — as well as people of birth, fortune, and connexion. The most cherished of her friends were those whose names were and are habitually associated with intellectual excellence, refinement, and grace. The Marchioness of Lansdowne, Lady Crewe, Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, Miss Fox, Mrs. Hope (Lady Beresford), the Misses Berry, Miss Catharine Fanshawe, Lady Spencer, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, the Countess of Charleville, Lydia White, Mrs. Siddons, Lady Milbanke, were of the number. She speaks thus of another, whom she had known from girlhood:

"Charming, amiable, Lady Wellington! as she truly said of herself, she is always 'Kitty Pakenham to her friends;' after comparison with crowds of other *beaux esprits*, fine ladies and fashionable scramblers for notoriety, her dignified graceful simplicity rises in our opinion, and we feel it with more conviction of its superiority. She showed us her delightful children. I have been standing in my dressing-gown writing on the top of a chest of drawers, and now I must dress for a breakfast at Lady Davy's, where we are to meet Lord Byron; but I must say that at the third place where we were let in yesterday, Lady Wellington's, we spent by far the most agreeable half-hour of the day."

The Edgeworths were persons of birth, fortune, and connexion, in addition to their literary claims, and simply assumed their natural place when they joined the aristocratic circles, which eagerly courted them. There is nothing, therefore, at all odd, much less reprehensible, in her notices of London life being principally confined to the precincts of May Fair. At all events, they were not confined to fine ladies. Speaking of the same period, Mrs. Edgeworth says: "One day, coming too late to dinner at Mr. Horner's, we found Doctor Parr very angry at our having delayed and then interrupted dinner; but he ended by giving Maria his blessing." This is probably the occasion on which Edgeworth boasted before Lord Byron of having put down Parr. She adds: "We unfortunately missed seeing Madame d'Arblay, and we left London before the arrival of Madame de Staël." This falls in with a story printed in Moore's Diary:

"In talking of getting into awkward scrapes at dinner tables, Lady Dunmore mentioned a circumstance of the kind in which Rogers

was concerned. It was at the time when Madame de Staël was expected in London, and somebody at table (there being a large party) asked when she was likely to arrive. 'Not till Miss Edgeworth is gone,' replied Rogers: 'Madame de Staël would not like two stars shining at the same time.' The words were hardly out of his mouth, when he saw a gentleman rise at the other end of the table and say in a solemn tone: '*Madame la Baronne de Staël est incapable d'une telle bassesse.*' It was Auguste de Staël, her son, whom Rogers had never before seen."

Two curious traits of children, who have since fully justified the expectations formed of them, were set down by her in 1813:

"April 25, 1813. — I enclose the Butterfly's Ball for Sophy, and a letter to the King written by Dr. Holland when six years old: his father found him going with it to the post. (This letter was an offer from Master Holland to raise a regiment. He and some of his little comrades had got a drum and a flag, and used to go through the manual exercise. It was a pity the letter did not reach the King: he would have been delighted with it.)

"August, 1813. — We have just seen a journal by a little boy of eight years old, of a voyage from England to Sicily; the boy is Lord Mahon's son, Lord Carrington's grandson. It is one of the best journals I ever read, full of facts: exactly the writing of a child, but a very clever child."

This very clever child is the present Earl Stanhope.

"Harrington" and "Ormond," with "Thoughts on Boreas" (two volumes), was published in May, 1817, with the usual preface by Edgeworth, the last he was destined to write. He died on the 13th of June; and, partly from grief, partly from a complaint in her eyes, Miss Edgeworth wrote hardly any letters for many months. As soon as she was sufficiently recovered from the shock, she set to work to complete her father's Memoirs, which she had to take up and continue from 1782. The whole of the second volume is by her. The work is amusing; many incidents and traits of character are recorded in it which would have left a chasm in her own biography had they been lost; but it was the least successful of their joint productions, and her part was perceptibly impaired by its being too much a labour of love. It was criticised in the "Quarterly Review" (Oct. 1820) with extreme bitterness, and in a manner (whatever the intention) particularly adapted to give pain, not only to Maria, but to the entire family; for the four marriages (to

which the reviewer tried hard to add a fifth) were made the mark of much moral indignation, real or simulated. Dumont wrote to her: "If by accident you have not read this infamous article, I should advise you not to read it, and to abandon it to public contempt." Mrs. Marcet spoke of it as a subject which made her blood boil, and "roused every feeling of contempt and abhorrence." Miss Edgeworth wrote at once to her aunt from Paris (Nov. 1820): "Never lose another night's sleep or another moment's thought on the 'Quarterly Review.' I have never read, and never will read it." She kept her word.

Having finished the Memoirs, she determined to indulge herself in what she had long projected, a visit to Paris with her two young sisters (by the fourth marriage) Fanny and Harriet, and we find them settled in the Place du Palais Bourbon in April 29, 1820.

In one of her letters from Paris, she says: "I find always when I come to the end of my paper that I have not told you several entertaining things I had treasured up for you. I had a history of a man and woman from Cochin China which must now be squeezed almost to death." This will be just our case. We shall come to the end of our paper without being able to bring in a tithe of the entertaining, and better than entertaining, things we had noted down: we have more than one history which must be squeezed almost to death or never live at all in our pages. Her letters sparkle with brilliant names, and, in most instances, with fresh anecdotes or reminiscences attached to them. The doors of all the leading hotels and salons flew open at her approach, including those of the Faubourg St. Germain; for the connexion with the Abbé Edgeworth had now become a safe passport to the houses of the ancient noblesse. The French always spoke of him as the Abbé de Firmont, a name he had taken on account of the difficulty they found in the *w* and *th*; Edgewatz being their nearest approximation to the sound. At one house, a valet, after Maria had several times repeated "Edgeworth," exclaimed, "*Ah, je renonce à ça*;" and throwing open the door of the salon, announced, "*Madame Maria et Mesdemoiselles ses sœurs.*" Byron speaks of some Russian or Polish names as "names that would descend to posterity if posterity could but pronounce them." Many English names are exposed to the same disadvantage. An English traveller passed the better part of an evening at Tieck's at Dresden, in 1834, vainly endeavouring to

teach some German ladies to pronounce "Wordsworth." Few of them got nearer than "Vudvutt."

The form of the visiting cards of the party, adopted (she says) after due deliberation, was "Madame Maria Edgeworth et Mesdemoiselles ses sœurs." Her sisters were attractive girls, and she had no reason to complain of being over-weighted with them, particularly at Paris, where a guest more or less, even at a dinner party, was never so serious an affair as we are wont to make of it. A notion of their Parisian life may be conveyed in a brief extract:

"We have seen Mademoiselle Mars twice or thrice rather, in the 'Mariage de Figaro' and in the little pieces of 'Le Jaloux sans Amour,' and 'La Jeunesse de Henri Cinq,' and admire her exceedingly. In petit comité the other night at the Duchesse d'Escars, a discussion took place between the Duchesse de la Force, Marmont, and Pozzo di Borgo, on the *bon et mauvais ton* of different expressions—*bonne société* is an expression *bourgeoise*—you may say *bonne compagnie* or *la haute société*. 'Voilà des nuances,' as Madame d'Escars said. Such a wonderful jabbering as these grandes made about these small matters. It put me in mind of a conversation in the 'World' on good company which we all used to admire."

Yet Marmont and Pozzo di Borgo were grandes of no common order. She met all the scientific men of note at Cuvier's, who gave a good instance of Bonaparte's insisting on a decided answer. He asked me, "Faut-il introduire le sucre de betterave en France?" "D'abord, Sire, il faut songer à vos colonies."—"Faut-il avoir le sucre de betterave en France?"—"Mais, Sire, il faut examiner."—"Bah! je le demanderai à Berthelot."

She says of Benjamin Constant:—

"I do not like him at all: his countenance, voice, manner, and conversation are all disagreeable to me. He is a fair, *whitky*-looking man (*sic*), very near-sighted, with spectacles which seem to pinch his nose. . . . He has been well called the *héros des brochures*. We sat beside one another, and I think we felt a mutual antipathy. On the other side of me was Roger Collard, suffering with toothache and swelled face; but notwithstanding the distortion of the swelling, the natural expression of his countenance and the strength and sincerity of his soul made their way, and the frankness of his character and the plain superiority of his talents were manifest in five minutes' conversation."

After leaving Paris they made a short tour in Switzerland, and passed some de-

lightful days at Geneva during what has been termed its Augustan age. Dumont acted as their guide, and one of their first dinners was at Dr. and Mrs. Marce's, with Dumont, M. and Madame Prevost, M. de la Rive, M. Bonstettin (Gray's friend), and M. de Candolles. During a visit to Coppet, where the Duc and Duchesse de Broglie then were, she is able to exclaim exultingly, "Here we are in the very apartments occupied by M. Necker, opening into what is now the library, but what was once that theatre on which Madame de Staël used to act her own Corinne." . . . "There is something inexpressibly melancholy, awful, in this house, in these rooms, where the thought continually occurs, Here genius was! here was ambition! here all the great struggles of the passions; here was Madame de Staël!"

With Madame de Staël and Madame de Broglie (it is added in the Memoir) Maria was particularly happy; and there are two anecdotes of Madame de Staël which we cannot make up our minds to forego. The first was related by Dumont:

"One day M. Suard, as he entered the saloon of the hôtel Necker, saw Madame Necker going out of the room, and Mademoiselle Necker standing in a melancholy attitude with tears in her eyes. Guessing that Madame Necker had been lecturing her, Suard went towards her to comfort her, and whispered, '*Une carresse du papa vous dédommagera bien de tout ça.*' She immediately, wiping the tears from her eyes, answered, '*Eh! oui, Monsieur, mon père songe à mon bonheur présent, mamma songe à mon avenir.*' There was more than presence of mind, there was heart and soul and greatness of mind in this answer."

Miss Edgeworth took down from the Duchess of Wellington's own lips a dialogue between herself and Madame de Staël on a remarkable occasion. The Duchess had purposely avoided making the acquaintance of Madame de Staël in England, not knowing how she might be received by the Bourbons after the Restoration. Finding on her arrival at Paris that Corinne was well received, she invited her to go to her first assembly. She came, and walking up straight to the Duchess, with flashing eyes, began:

"Eh! Madame la Duchesse, vous ne vouliez pas donc faire ma connaissance on Angleterre?"

"Non, Madame, je ne le voulais pas."

"Eh! comment, Madame? Pourquoi donc?"

"C'est que je vous craignais, Madame."

"Vous me craignez, Madame la Duchesse?"

"Non, Madame, je ne vous crains plus.

"Madame de Staël threw her arms round her: Ah, je vous adore."

They return to England at the beginning of December 1820, and we next find them at Bowood, where Miss Edgeworth was a frequent and welcome guest. Once when T. Moore met her there, after recording in his Diary the effect of his singing (which he never omits to record) on Dugald Stewart, he adds: "Miss Edgeworth, too, was much affected. This is a delightful triumph, to touch the higher spirits." At a later period, in reference to an invitation to breakfast at Rogers', he sets down: "Went and found Miss Edgeworth, Luttrell, Lord Normanby and Sharpe. Miss Edgeworth, with all her cleverness, anything but agreeable. The moment any one begins to speak, off she starts too, seldom more than a sentence behind them, and in general contrives to distance every speaker. Neither does what she say, though of course very sensible, at all make up for this over-activity of tongue." Moore (like Rogers) judged people subjectively, not objectively — from his own feelings, sympathies or antipathies, not from their "qualities, merits or demerits." We are as certain as if we were present that Miss Edgeworth put him out, anticipated him in a favourite story, or added a touch of Irish humour which he had let slip. From personal recollection of her manner of conversing, we can state positively that it was utterly remote from eagerness for display or over-activity of tongue. Lord Byron says her conversation was as quiet as herself. Lockhart, who was fastidious enough in all conscience, was delighted with her; and Scott writes (in 1827): — "It is scarcely possible to say more of this very remarkable person than that she not only completely answered but exceeded the expectations which I had formed. I am particularly pleased with the *naïveté* and good-humoured ardour of mind which she unites with such formidable powers of acute observation."

Fashion, in its best sense, is essentially a discriminating and almost a democratic principle; it unscrupulously overrides birth, fortune, and even fame, for purely personal distinction and agreeability. We have known many a lion and lioness dropped after a short trial. We never knew one retain the coveted position long by mere literary celebrity, much less by restless anxiety for display. The object of the most refined and cultivated society of London and Paris, in their ordinary intercourse, is not to instruct or be instructed, to dazzle or be

dazzled, but to please and be pleased. Now, Miss Edgeworth was pre-eminently the fashion year after year, and she wisely acted on Colton's maxim in "Lacon": "In all societies it is advisable to associate, if possible, with the highest. In the grand theatre of human life, a *box-ticket* takes you through the house." During her visit to London in 1822, we find her spending a morning in Newgate with Mrs. Fry, receiving Sir Humphry Davy in the afternoon, taken by Whitbread to the ladies' gallery in the House of Commons, and finishing with Almack's in its heyday:

"Fanny and Harriet have been with me at that grand exclusive paradise of fashion, Almack's. Observe that the present Duchess of Rutland, who had been a few months away from town, and had offended the lady patronesses by not visiting them, could not at her utmost need get a ticket from any one of them, and was kept out to her amazing mortification. This may give you some idea of the importance attached to admission to Almack's. Kind Mrs. Hope got tickets for us from Lady Gwydir and Lady Cowper (Lady Palmerston); the patronesses can only give tickets to those whom they personally know; on that plea they avoided the Duchess of Rutland's application, she had not visited them, — 'they really did not know her grace,' and Lady Cowper swallowed a camel for me, because she did not really know me; I had met her, but had never been introduced to her till I saw her at Almack's."

"Fanny and Harriet were beautifully dressed: their heads by Lady Lansdowne's hair-dresser, Trichot; Mrs. Hope lent Harriet a wreath of her own French roses. Fanny was said by many to be, if not the prettiest, the most elegant-looking young woman in the room, and certainly 'elegant, birth, and fortune were there assembled,' as the newspapers would truly say."

Lord Londonderry hurries up to talk of "Castle Rackrent" and Ireland, and introduced them to Lady Londonderry, who invites them to one of her grandest parties. And then they become "very intimate" with Wollaston and Kater, Mr. Warburton, and Dr. and Mrs. Somerville. "They and Dr. and Mrs. Marcet form the most agreeable as well as scientific society in London." And then they dine with Lydia White, and become acquainted with Mrs. Siddons, who relates an incident of her career which it was worth going a long way to hear from her own lips:

"She gave us the history of her first acting of Lady Macbeth, and of her resolving, in the sleep scene, to lay down the candlestick, contrary to the precedent of Mrs. Pritchard and all

the traditions, before she began to wash her hands and say, 'Out vile spot!' Sheridan knocked violently at her door during the five minutes she had desired to have entirely to herself, to compose her spirits before the play began. He burst in, and prophesied that she would ruin herself for ever if she persevered in this resolution to lay down the candlestick! She persisted, however, in her determination, succeeded, was applauded, and Sheridan begged her pardon. She described well the awe she felt, and the power of the excitement given to her by the sight of Burke, Fox, Sheridan, and Sir Joshua Reynolds in the pit."

To excuse her constant yearning for the stage after her formal retirement, she was wont to say that nothing in life could equal the excitement caused by that sea of upturned faces in the pit. This story leads naturally to one told by Sir Humphry Davy:

"Sir Humphry repeated to us a remarkable criticism of Buonaparte's on Talma's acting: 'You don't play Nero well; you gesticulate too much; you speak with too much vehemence. A despot does not need all that; he need only pronounce. *'Il sait qu'il se suffit.'*' 'And,' added Talma, who told this to Sir Humphry, 'Buonaparte, as he said this, folded his arms in his well-known manner, and stood as if his attitude expressed the sentiment.'"

Before hastening (and we must hasten) to the conclusion, we may mention, in passing, that the third volume of the Memoir contains a long correspondence with Captain Basil Hall, to whom she acted as literary adviser, and an account of an expedition to Connemara with Sir Culling and Lady Smith, which rivals the best Irish sketches in her books. She complained bitterly of the loss of her own literary monitor and coadjutor; and shrank from completing and publishing much which, under his approving eye, she would have given to the world. We have heard on good authority that she left chests full of stories in manuscript which the family have refrained from printing. Her literary labours do not appear to have been very profitable. Lockhart, who acted for her in some of her later arrangements with publishers, states that she never realized for the best of her Irish tales a tithe of the sum (700*l.*) given for Waverley. Yet Waverley on its first appearance was called a "Scotch Castle Rackrent."

"Harry and Lucy" was begun by her father and his second wife Honora, in 1787,

to illustrate his notions of practical education. Day offered to assist, and with this view wrote "Sandford and Merton," which was first designed for a short story to be inserted in "Harry and Lucy." Edgeworth, therefore, had some reason for boasting that the public owed "Sandford and Merton" to him. This is not the first time that a work of lasting reputation has been produced in the same manner. "Eothen" was written to assist the author of "The Crescent and the Cross," and was at one time intended to appear as a kind of supplement to that work.

There is a letter from Scott to Joanna Baillie, in which he writes:

"I have not the pen of our friend Miss Edgeworth, who writes all the while she laughs, talks, eats, and drinks, and I believe, though I do not pretend to be so far in the secret, all the time she sleeps, too. She has good luck in having a pen which walks at once so unweariably and so well. I do not, however, quite like her last book on Education ('Harry and Lucy'), considered as a general work. She should have limited the title to 'Education in Natural Philosophy,' or some such term, for there is no great use in teaching children in general to roof houses or build bridges, which, after all, a carpenter or a mason does a great deal better at 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day. . . . Your ordinary Harry should be kept to his grammar, and your Lucy, of most common occurrence, would be kept employed on her sampler, instead of wasting wood and cutting their fingers, which I am convinced they did, though their historian says nothing of it."

The fault of all her and her father's children's books is that they exact too much from both pupil and teacher, and greatly overestimate the probable or even possible results of their system. They place no bounds to what education can effect. This is more especially the defect of "Frank"—a work, in other respects, of signal excellence, which well deserves to retain its rank as the first of English boys' books.

Scott's visitors were wont to express the same wonder at the unseen and unaccountable performances of his pen which he expresses of the unwearied walk of hers. The difference between them in this respect was that he got up early and wrote for two or three hours before breakfast, after which he felt at full liberty to amuse himself with his guests. She generally sat down to her writing-desk (a small and plain one made by her father) in the common sitting-room, soon after breakfast, and wrote till luncheon, her chief meal; then did some needlework, took a short drive, and wrote for the rest of

* Life of Scott, vol. iii. p. 124. The Quarterly Review, vol. ii. p. 356.

the afternoon. She probably varied her habits during Scott's visit to Edgeworth-Town.

On May 7th, 1849, being then in her eighty-third year, she writes to Mrs. Richard Bul-ler: "I am heartily obliged and delighted by your being such a goose, and Richard such a gander, as to be frightened out of your wits at my going up the ladder to take off the top of the clock." She actually had mounted the ladder, as if emulous of the fate of that old Countess of Desmond, who broke her neck by a fall from a cherry-tree. On the 22d she was taken suddenly ill with pain in the region of her heart, and expired within a few hours in the arms of her step-mother, the author of the *Memoir*.

The general character of Miss Edgeworth's productions was so exhaustively discussed in her lifetime, and the traditional estimate of them is so fixed and unanimous, that little remains for us but to take a retrospective glance at their prominent features—to sum up her many merits, and few demerits, as one of the most fertile, popular, and influential English novelists of her age. All are agreed in ranking amongst her qualities the finest powers of observation; the most penetrating good sense; a high moral tone consistently maintained; inexhaustible fertility of invention; firmness and delicacy of touch; undeviating rectitude of purpose; varied and accurate knowledge; a clear flexible style; exquisite humour, and extraordinary mastery of pathos. What she wants, what she could not help wanting with her matter-of-fact understanding and practical turn of mind, are poetry, romance, passion, sentiment. In her judgment the better part of life and conduct is discretion. She has not only no toleration for self-indulgence or criminal weakness: she has no sympathy with lofty, defiant, uncalculating heroism or greatness: she never snatches a grace beyond the reach of prudence: she never arrests us by scenes of melo-dramatic intensity, or hurries us along breathless by a rapid train of exciting incidents to an artistically prepared catastrophe. Neither does she shine in historic painting; and she would have failed in "high art" had she aspired to it. Her gaze was too constantly fixed on the surface to admit of much depth or breadth of thought; and she was deficient in the art of combining more than a limited number of scenes and characters into a plot.

The late Earl of Dudley, a fervent admirer, christened her the Anti-sentimental

Novelist; and Madame de Staël was reported to have said, "*que Miss Edgeworth était digne de l'enthousiasme, mais qu'elle s'est perdue dans la triste utilité.*" When this was repeated during the visit at Coppet in 1820, the Duchess de Broglie declared, "*Ma mère n'a jamais dû cela; elle en était incapable.*" For all that, we suspect she did say it. The internal evidence is strong, and the remark is partly founded in truth. Miss Edgeworth is worthy of the highest admiration of the soberer kind; she does not inspire enthusiasm; and she would have been more useful, as well as a thousand fold more attractive, had she thought and written less about utility.

Goethe was wont to maintain that the writer of a work of fiction should take no thought of the moral: that he should keep true to nature and leave the moral to take care of itself. This may be accepted as a sound canon of criticism, subject to a limitation obviously understood. The poet, dramatist, or novelist may safely give the rein to invention under the conscious control of good feeling and good sense. It is not his or her business to vindicate the ways of God to man; much less to warp events in such a manner as to vindicate them. In the case of a story-book for children, there is no great harm in playing Providence in this fashion; for the parent or master can so manage the distribution of rewards and punishments as that good or bad behaviour shall be speedily followed by the fitting results. Only, when goodness is uniformly productive of extra holidays, pocket-money, and playthings, this is much the same as bribing or coaxing children to be good. But in stories for grown-up people, corresponding results can rarely be brought about without shocking probability or jarring against the religious faith which looks to the next world to redress the injustice and inequality of this. The folly of trying to fathom the designs of the Infinite is well exposed in the Arabian fable which supplied the story of Parnell's Hermit, and is employed (in "*Zadig*") with his wonted felicity by Voltaire. The third Epistle of the "*Essay on Man*" is a beautiful amplification of the same argument.

In one of the Popular Tales, entitled "*To-morrow*," the hero is within an ace of ruin by arriving too late to sail with the Chinese Embassy to which he is attached. When a friend of ours was travelling with the late Lord Alvanley, his lordship was almost always behind his time, and to a laughing remonstrance replied, "Why, my dear fellow, the fact is, these dilatory habits

of mine saved my life. I was about to embark at Trieste for Constantinople; my carriage and servants were on board; I arrived too late; the ship sailed without me, and was never heard of again. I am now unpunctual upon principle." The same hero fails in a literary career, for which he is well fitted by knowledge and capacity, because he is always procrastinating either the composition or the publication of his books. But Dr. Johnson seldom began the required paper for the Rambler till there was just time enough to save the post and not time enough to revise what he had written. Sheridan boasted that he never did to-day what by any device he could put off till to-morrow; and we could name more than one successful author, now living, who has sorely tried the patience of an expectant public by his dilatoriness.

Moore one day asked Rogers what he did when people, who wanted his autograph, requested him to sign a sentence with his name. "Oh, I give them 'Ill-gotten wealth never prospers,' or 'Evil communications corrupt good manners,' or, 'Virtue is its own reward.'" Luttrell broke in: "Then the more shame for you to circulate such delusions. Do not the ill-gotten wealth of * * * and * * * prosper? Haven't * * * and * * *, whose communications are all evil, the best manners of any men of our acquaintance? Look at your honest, excellent friend, * * * to whom you, Rogers, lent ten pounds yesterday. Is virtue its own reward in his case? Or, when Pitt spouted Horace and talked of involving himself in his virtue, was he the less eager to be First Lord of the Treasury again?"

Now, Miss Edgeworth would not have hesitated a moment to take either one of these maxims as her starting-point; and her father would have written a preface to announce that the moral had been conclusively and satisfactorily worked out. Their mode of working out the moral of "Virtue is its own reward" would be to picture Virtue richly attired, crowned with laurel, and bearing a cornucopia in her hand.

Do we not all know hundreds who have got on by patronage? or who have got their first step through a patron, and with occasional help of the same kind have risen steadily and creditably to the top of the tree? The fact is notorious, but unless it can be ignored or kept in the background, it is extremely difficult to demonstrate by a probable succession of events that self-reliance is the only sure or honourable stepping-stone to success. The fictitious narrative will be impaired by the daily obser-

vation of the reality, and impaired in exact proportion to the completeness with which it is made to correspond with the premeditated end. Thus, in "Patronage," the most indulgent or indifferent reader will be startled by the sudden and simultaneous discomfiture or disgrace of the entire family who have obtained an excellent start by interest. The Dean, the best of the lot, is let off with the lightest sentence. He is married for money to a woman whom he had described the day before as "an old, ugly, cross, avaricious devil." This is *his* destiny. The colonel, on foreign service, is out shooting when an important order arrives, sent home under arrest, and cashiered. The diplomatist is detected in a piece of treachery to his official patron, and dismissed. The beauty, "Georgy," after missing marriage after marriage, is sent to try her fortune with faded charms to India. A conspiracy for raising money by the sale of places through the instrumentality of forged letters is brought home to the manœuvring mother; and the father is left, another Marius amongst the ruins, lamenting over the failure of his system and his schemes. Scott clears the ground for the desired conclusion of "Rob Roy" in the same summary style. Of Sir Hildebrand's four sons, the quarrelsome one is killed in a duel; the sot dies of a fever caused by a drinking bout; the horse-jockey breaks his neck in an attempt to show off a foundered blood-mare; and the fool is killed at Preston fighting bravely for a cause he could never be made to understand. But Scott, far from writing towards a preappointed moral, commonly began without a plan. Miss Edgeworth had entered into a voluntary engagement to connect the downfall of the Falconers with their method of rising, and no logical or necessary connexion is made out.

Miss Edgeworth is not satisfied with ordering events; she also frames characters to match. "Murad the Unlucky" is an example. No man of observation and experience will deny that there are such things as good luck and ill luck; and no man of sense will dissent from Jeremy Taylor's axiom that "life is like playing at tables: the luck is not in our power, but the playing the game is." Whether success in the world depends most on prudence or fortune, the point in dispute between the Sultan and the Vizier of the tale, is one requiring the utmost delicacy of handling. But Murad is simply a foolish, weak, careless, idle, drunken fellow, who goes out of his way to get into trouble; whilst his brother, Saladin the Lucky, is industry, sobriety, sagacity,

firmness and foresight personified. The terms "lucky" and "unlucky" have no application to such men. There is no good luck in saving a city from incendiaries by courage and presence of mind: there is no ill-luck in setting fire to a ship by leaving a lighted pipe on a bale of cotton.

In "Patronage," again, the rival families are so unequal that they cannot be handicapped for the race. The one has all the good qualities, the other almost all the bad. Reverse the position: encumber the Percys (to borrow a Johnsonian phrase) with any amount of help; leave the Falconers entirely to their own resources; and the sole difference in the result under any easily conceivable circumstances will be, that the Percys will rise more rapidly and the Falconers never rise at all. Indeed, it might have been better for the plot if they never had risen. The sickening pang of hope deferred is the appropriate punishment of placehunting, which ought not to be associated with even temporary success.

"Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail."

Boswell states that Johnson first wrote *garret*, "but after experiencing the uneasiness which Lord Chesterfield's fallacious patronage made him feel, he dismissed the word from the sad group and replaced it by *patron*."

The intended effect of "The Lottery" is similarly impaired. The hero gains a 5,000*l.* prize, which unsettles his habits and blights his life. There are numerous instances in which a similar catastrophe has been produced by an unexpected inheritance. Yet not one poor man in a hundred would refuse a fortune, or refrain from putting into the lottery, for fear of being demoralised by wealth. The human mind is so constituted that we all think we can separate the evil from the good, and no experience avails us but our own. Theodore Hook regularly took a ticket in the Austrian lottery in the hope of gaining the castle on the Danube. This was his mirage in the desert, his *château en Espagne*, for years; and a good story might be made out of the shifts to which he was frequently put to raise the money, and his feverish agitation when the time for drawing was at hand.

In stories where Miss Edgeworth clogs herself with a moral, she recalls the runner in the German legend who ties his legs together to moderate his pace; and when she keeps pressing considerations of utility on the reader, she may be compared to a host who, when you are admiring the undulating

variety of his grounds or enjoying a fine prospect, requests your attention to his mode of draining and fencing, or drags you away to inspect the plan of a projected almshouse or school-room.

To a totally different category belong novels like the "Absentee," in which the struggles and mortifications of an Irish family of rank in the fine world of London are held up as a warning; or those which, like Joanna Baillie's *Plays on the Passions*, are composed for the development of character or the exposure of any given mental malady with its cure. In "Ennui," Lord Glenethorn, the prototype of *L'Homme Blasé* ("Used Up"), is a dramatic conception of a high order; and the scenes through which he is led, independently of their merit as representations of manners, are admirably adapted to exhibit the peculiar state of feeling contracted by satiety. There are passages in which the young English peer recalls Alfieri in phases of mind described in his autobiography; but, as we learn from the letters, Miss Edgeworth cautiously avoided confounding fact with fiction; and it is only in the most ambitious of her portraits that she can be accused of transgressing sound principles of art. Lord Dudley, who reviewed "Patronage" in the "Quarterly Review," objected that a modern Premier is out of place in a novel. A drawing from the life is of course not permissible, and there are not modern Premiers enough to supply materials for an artistic creation. To conceive one without individual traits would be as difficult as Martinus found it to form an abstract idea of a Lord Mayor without any of the ensigns of his dignity. Miss Edgeworth's Lord Ojlborough, excepting two or three slight points of resemblance to Lord Chatham and Lord Grenville, is unlike any Premier in *esse* or *posse*; and we agree with Lord Dudley that, powerfully as he is drawn, a great part of our interest is destroyed by constantly recollecting, not only that he did not exist, but that he could not have existed.

The same objection does not hold good against her Chief Justice; for there have been a great many chief justices. We once heard her say that she had Chief Justice Bushe uppermost in her thoughts during the delineation; which has been questioned on the ground that he did not become Chief Justice till after the publication of the book. The difficulty is cleared up by a letter dated January 14, 1822, in which she says: "I am rejoiced at Mr. Bushe's promotion. Mrs. Bushe sent to me, through Anne Nan-

gle, a most kind message, alluding to our 'Patronage' Chief Justice by *Second Sight*."

Lord Dudley also hints a doubt whether her English sketches do not suggest that she had taken only an occasional and cursory view of English society. This is not our impression, although she treads more firmly and freely on Irish ground, and the stories of which the scenes are laid in Ireland are most redolent of humour and pathos, more deeply and broadly marked with the stamp of her peculiar genius than the rest. Lord Jeffrey has reprinted in the corrected edition of his works the opinion which he delivered forty-five years since in this *Journal*, that, if she had never written anything but the epistle of Larry Brady, the post-boy, to his brother, which forms the conclusion of the "Absentee," "this one letter must have placed her at the very top of our scale, as an observer of character, and a mistress in the simple pathetic." Without disputing this opinion, we would undertake to produce half-a-dozen passages of equal merit from the same novel, from "Ormond," or from "Ennui." Lord Jeffrey had already said that she need not be afraid of being excelled by any of her contemporaries in "that faithful but flattering representation of the spoken language of persons of wit and politeness—in that light and graceful tone of raillery and argument—and in that gift of sportive but cutting *médiancé*, which is sure of success in those circles where success is supposed to be most difficult and desirable." He appeals to the conversation of Lady Delacour, Lady Dashford, and Lady Geraldine. If required to specify a complete sketch of an English gentlewoman, he might confidently have pointed to Lady Jane Granville, Mrs. Hungerford, or Mrs. Mortimer.

Speaking of Lord Wellesley in 1825, Moore notes down in his *Diary*:—"Gave me some very pretty verses of his own to Miss Edgeworth. Showed me some verses of hers to him, strongly laudatory, but very bad." Moore would have thought any verses bad that had not his own exquisite finish; but verse-making was not her vocation, and poetry was not her forte.

Sheridan, struck by the spirit and point of the dialogue in "Belinda," recommended her to try her hand at dramatic composition; and two "comic dramas," three acts each—"Love and Law," and "The Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock"—are printed in the collected edition of her works. The unity of action wanting in her novels is equally neglected in these dramas; the *dramatis personæ* are mostly Irish of the

lower class, and much of the dialogue is pure brogue. The utmost that can be said for these productions is that, if compressed into one-act farces, with Irish Johnson and Power to take parts, they might have had a run; and her name must be added to the long list of novelists, headed by Fielding and Le Sage, who have failed, or fallen lamentably short of the expected degree of excellence, in the kindred walk of fiction. The dramatic fame of the author of "Tom Jones" rests on the mock tragedy of "Tom Thumb;" and so long as the author of "Gil Blas" was only known as a playwright, no one saw any incongruity in the joke placed by Piron in the mouth of Panchinello:—"Pourquoi le fol de temps en temps ne droit-il pas de bonnes choses, puisque Le Sage de temps en temps dit de si mauvaises?"

It is from the apex of the pyramid that men calculate its height, and the altitude of genius must be taken where it has attained its culminating point. Let those who wish to appreciate Miss Edgeworth, and derive the greatest amount of refining and elevating enjoyment from her works, pass over the prefaces, short as they are—never think of the moral, excellent as it may be—be not over-critical touching the management of the story, but give themselves up to the charm of the dialogue, the scene-painting, the delineation and development of character, the happy blending of pathos and humour with the sobriety of truth. Let them do this, and they will cease to wonder at the proud position conceded to her by the dispassionate judgment of her most eminent contemporaries.

We cannot conclude without expressing an earnest wish that a Memoir so rich in curious matter, and so well calculated to confirm and even exalt her reputation, will not long be confined to a limited circle. In this age of monuments and testimonials, such a monument, if she wanted one, would be the most appropriate and the most durable.

The Government of Rome has just published the census of the population of that city in June of this year. It amounted to 215,573. Of these, 30 are cardinals, 35 bishops, 1,469 priests, and 828 seminarists. The occupants of religious houses number 5,047; 2,832 being monks and 2,215 nuns. The population, according to the above census, has increased 4,872 since June, 1866.

From the Quarterly Review.

1. *Souvenirs Militaires de 1804 à 1814.* Par M. le Duc de Fezensac, Général de Division. (Journal de la Campagne de Russie, 1812, en douze chapitres.) Paris, 1863.
2. *Mémoires.* Par L. F. J. Bausset, ancien Préfet du Palais Impérial. 2 vols. Bruxelles, 1827.
3. *Itinéraire de Napoléon I. de Smorgoni à Paris.* Extrait des *Mémoires du Baron Paul de Bourgoing.* Paris, 1862.
4. *Leben des Feldmarschalls Grafen York von Wartenburg.* Von J. G. Droysen. 3 Bände. Berlin, 1851.

WHEN Dr. Johnson composed his admirable poem on the Vanity of Human Wishes, in imitation of the no less admirable tenth satire of Juvenal, — and we scarcely know to which of the two we should assign the palm, — we find him substituting with great felicity modern examples, instead of those which Juvenal adduced. For Scjanus we have Wolsey; for Hannibal, Charles XII. of Sweden; for Servilia, Lady Vane. But when he came to the case of Xerxes, Dr. Johnson could remember no adequate parallel. Xerxes, therefore, is still the instance given in his poem, and it is the only one which he derives from ancient times.

"With half mankind embattled at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way.

* * * *

The insulted sea with humbler thought he gains,
A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
The encumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast,
Through purple billows and a floating host."

But had the lot of Johnson been cast later by some scores of years, with how noble a passage might not the retreat from Moscow have supplied him! How striking the parallel between the two conquerors, each at the outset marching forward confident of victory, and at the head of many hundred thousands warriors, and each having at the close to escape almost alone, the one in a single skiff over the "insulted sea," the other in a peasant's sledge across the frozen plains!

The retreat from Moscow in 1812 is, indeed, a subject of ever new and thrilling interest. Nowhere, perhaps, does modern

history display, within a compass of seven or eight weeks, so large an amount of individual suffering and national loss. Nowhere does the reckless force of the elements appear more completely victorious over all the genius, all the strength, all the resources of man. And often as we have perused the various narratives of that terrible disaster, we find ourselves ever and anon recurring to it as some fresh contributions to its story come forth from time to time. Two years since we called attention, though but very briefly, to the corresponding entries in the autobiography of Sir Robert Wilson. We now propose to resume the subject, adverting more especially to some memoirs or fragments of memoirs that we owe to France.

The judgment of the Duke of Wellington on this transaction is expressed in a short memorandum which he drew up in 1842, and which Lord Stanhope has published in his little volume of "Miscellanies." We will extract from it the following paragraphs:—

"Napoleon had made no preparation for the military retreat which he would have to make if his diplomatic efforts should fail, which they did. We see that he was distressed for want of communications even before he thought of retreat; his hospitals were not supplied nor even taken care of, and were at last carried off; and when he commenced to make a real movement of retreat he was involved in difficulties without number. The first basis of his operations was lost; the new one not established; and he was not strong enough to force his way to the only one which could have been practicable, and by the use of which he might have saved his army—by the sacrifice, however, of all those corps which were in the northern line of operations; I mean the line through Kalouga, through the southern countries. But instead of that, he was forced to take his retreat by the line of the river Beresina, which was exhausted, and upon which he had made no preparations whatever. This is, in few words, the history of that disaster."

But besides these faults of Napoleon which our great captain has here enumerated, there was certainly another and still far more considerable error—we mean his protracted stay at Moscow. Flushed with the pride of conquest, he seems to have regarded the Russian winter as though it might be, like the Russian army, defied and overcome. Surely the near approach of that terrible season ought to have been ever before his eyes. With that prospect he should have placed no dependence on the uncertain hopes of peace, and should have remained at Moscow no longer than

was absolutely necessary to rest and to re-form his troops.

Let us see whether an examination of the dates does not fully bear out this criticism. On the 7th of September Napoleon gained the battle of La Moskowa, as the French have termed it, or of Borodino, according to its Russian name—one of the hardest fought and bloodiest conflicts upon record in ancient or in modern times. On the 15th he made his entry into Moscow, and fixed his head-quarters at the Kremlin. On the very next day he left it again, driven forth by the conflagration which—we will here avoid the controversy as to its cause—had burst forth at once in various quarters of the city and enveloped the Kremlin with its lurid clouds. During three days, himself in the neighbouring château of Petrowskoi, and with his soldiers at their bivouacs around him, Napoleon might mournfully contemplate the dismal progress of the flames. At length on the 19th he was enabled to return to the citadel-palace. The conflagration had then almost ceased, but about four-fifths of the city were destroyed. The remaining houses, however, were sufficient to shelter the army, and there soon appeared means for its support. It is the custom in that country, owing to the length and severity of the winter, to lay in stores of provisions for several months, and thus the cellars of the burnt houses were found when laid open to contain large quantities of corn, of salted meat, of wine, and of brandy—nay, even of sugar and of tea. Thus the soldiers could at last obtain some refreshment, and repose after all their weary marches and their murderous battles.

On the 4th of October, and not till then, Napoleon despatched one of his aides-de-camp, M. de Lauriston, with pacific overtures to General Kutusof, the Russian commander-in-chief. Now, considering the advanced position of Napoleon's army, and the close approach of the Russian winter, we hold it as incontrovertible that on this 4th of October not a single French soldier should have remained at Moscow. The march back towards Poland should have begun at latest by that day.

The Russian chiefs, on this point more farsighted as knowing better the extremity of cold that was near at hand, considered the gain of time as their paramount object. On this principle General Kutusof received M. de Lauriston with all courtesy and seeming frankness. But he declared that he had no powers to sign an armistice, far less to conclude a treaty. It was necessary, he said, to refer the French overtures to the Emper-

or Alexander at Petersburg, and to Petersburg they were referred accordingly. Some ten or twelve days would be requisite, he added, before an answer could arrive; and on M. de Lauriston's report Napoleon determined to remain for this further period at Moscow.

Napoleon, indeed, had from the first, in common phrase, "settled down," as though resolved at all events on a considerable stay. Thus, for example, he had given orders for a series of theatrical representations, of which we learn some particulars from the amusing memoirs of M. de Bausset. This was the *Préfet du Palais*—a sleek well-fed gentleman, as it becomes court officials to be. His proper post was at the Tuileries, but he had been commissioned by Maria Louisa to convey to Napoleon a full-length portrait of their son, and he had arrived at head-quarters on the very day before the Borodino battle. Napoleon had at once displayed to his assembled chiefs the portrait, as he hoped, of their future sovereign, adding with much grace and dignity these words:—"*Messieurs, si mon fils avait quinze ans, croyez qu'il serait ici au milieu de tant de braves autrement qu'en peinture.*"

Subsequently M. de Bausset had attended the Emperor to Moscow, and he received from his Majesty the supreme direction of the intended theatrical representations. He found there already established a clever *directrice*, Madame Bursay, and a few good actors and actresses. Rich dresses in abundance were supplied from the Moscow stores.

"Les comédiens Français en tirèrent des robes et des habits de velours, qu'ils arrangèrent à leur taille, et sur lesquels ils appliquèrent de larges galons d'or qui étaient en abondance dans ces magasins. Réellement ils étaient vêtus avec une grande magnificence, mais leur détresse était telle que quelques-unes de nos actrices sous ces belles robes de velours avaient à peine le linge nécessaire; du moins c'est ce que me disait Madame Bursay."

But from this comic interlude (as Madame Bursay herself might have called it) we now revert to more serious scenes. It was found by Napoleon, after long and anxious suspense, that from Petersburg there came no acceptance of his overtures. The conqueror, disappointed in his hopes of peace, wavered yet for some time in his military plans. Finally his army, then still 100,000 strong, marched from Moscow on the 19th of October, and Napoleon set out to rejoin it the next day. Even then, however, he did not relinquish his hold of the city. He left Marshal Mortier with 10,000 men to

garrison the Kremlin, and the secret instructions which the head of his staff wrote to the *Intendant Général* (they bear date the 18th of October, and have been published by M. Thiers) contain these remarkable words:—"It being the Emperor's intention to return here, we shall keep the principal magazines of flour, of oats, and of brandy."

But Napoleon did not long persevere in this rash design. On the evening of the 20th, only a few hours after leaving Moscow, he sent orders to Marshal Mortier of a directly opposite tenour. The Marshal was now directed to blow up the Kremlin by means of mines already prepared, to evacuate the city, and to retire with his troops and with the column of sick and wounded along the Smolensk road. On the night of the 23d, accordingly, the Kremlin was shattered, though not destroyed, by the desired explosion, and on the next morning the Marshal began his retrograde march. Thus instead of the 4th it was the 24th of October, at the verge of the Russian winter, when the last of the French troops took their departure from the Russian capital.

Meanwhile *la Grande Armée*, under Napoleon himself, was by no means marching straight to Smolensk on its way to Poland. On the contrary, it was directing its course towards Kalouga, with a view to the occupation of the southern provinces. Kutusof, however, was in its front. On the 24th one of the French *corps d'armée* gained a victory over a corresponding Russian division at Malo-Jaroslawetz. But the French had lost 4000 killed in that hard-fought combat, and it was little compensation to them to boast or to believe that the Russians had lost 6000. The Russians in the heart of their own country were daily receiving reinforcements, while on the invaders, at that enormous distance even from the Polish frontier, the loss of every soldier told.

This last consideration could not fail to weigh heavy on Napoleon, when next day he found the whole army of Kutusof before him placed in a strong position, and saw that he could only press forward to Kalouga by first giving battle. He might probably win that battle, but it would be, as at La Moskowa, after a desperate resistance and with a grievous loss of slain. Worse still, it might leave him with some 8000 or 10,000 wounded whom he had no means of transporting, and whom when he moved onward he must leave to perish where they fell.

More than ever perplexed, Napoleon in the course of the 25th entered a barn in the

little village of Gorodnia, and there held a council of his chiefs. All of them concurred in thinking an advance upon Kalouga inexpedient. Davoust alone advised an intermediate course through a not yet exhausted country. The others were for rejoining the main road from Moscow to Smolensk, and marching back to Poland by the shortest route.

The reason of Napoleon was convinced, but his pride rebelled. Retreat was a new word to him, ever since at least he raised the siege of Acre. Still undecided, he turned round, and with one of his familiar gestures seized by the ear one of his bravest officers, General Mouton Comte de Lobau, the same who subsequently rose to political distinction in the reign of Louis Philippe. M. Thiers, who had sat with him in council and who knew him well, describes him as *soldat rude et fin, ayant l'adresse de se taire et de ne parler qu'à propos*. Napoleon, still with the General's ear in hand, asked him what he thought. The other chiefs, according to the custom at that period of the Imperial sway, had given their opinions with abundance of courtly phrases and deferential circumlocution. But Lobau, seeing the moment opportune, answered *en termes incisifs*, "I think that we ought to leave at once, and by the shortest route, a country where we have remained too long!"

This reply, and the tone of it, produced a strong effect on Napoleon. Nevertheless, as though enough of time had not been lost already, he put off his decision till the morrow. On the ensuing day, therefore, he consulted his officers again, and, finding them as decided as ever for the Smolensk road, he issued orders that the troops should next morning, the 27th, begin their march in that direction. Thus it was not till that day, the 27th of October, that at the *Grande Armée* a movement of decided retreat commenced.

It is at this point that we begin to derive many particulars from the book which we have named at the beginning of this article. M. de Fezensac, many years subsequently raised to the rank of Duke, was, in 1812, a young officer of great spirit and skill. He was also son-in-law of Clarke, Duke de Feltre, at that time Minister of War. Both these circumstances may be thought to have contributed in equal degrees to his rapid advancement. When the Colonel of his regiment (the 4th of the line) fell in the bloody battle of La Moskowa, Fezensac was named to the vacant post. His regiment, as we shall see, was in the rear-guard—the post of by far the greatest danger

and the greatest suffering—in the worst days of the disastrous retreat; and the journal which he has written of that period is no less striking than authentic. It first appeared at Paris in a separate form, but is now embodied in the author's "*Souvenirs Militaires*"—the whole of which we commend, as they well deserve, to the attention of our readers.

Mojaisk—a small town on the direct road from Moscow to Smolensk—was the point to which the *Grande Armée* was directing its course from Malo-Jaroslawetz. That point would be reached in three days, which, with the eight already passed since Moscow, made eleven. But it might have been reached in four by the straight line from Moscow. Thus, then, an entire week would have been employed in unavailing marches. Nor was it merely the loss of time—time trebly precious at that season. The consumption of provisions had also to be considered. When the *Grande Armée* had left Moscow, several of its chiefs, even Napoleon himself, stood aghast at the large amount of its *impedimenta belli*. Cars and carriages, droskis and *berlines*, and every other kind of vehicle, bore along, besides the sick and wounded and the numerous officers' servants, a train of women and young children—French residents or visitors at Moscow who were escaping from the apprehended vengeance of the Russians—and among them that company of actors and actresses of which we have already given some account. Piled on the cars were seen the munitions of war and the spoils of plunder, extending even to articles of furniture, and together with them huge bags filled with divers kinds of food. There was also an immense train, wholly out of proportion to the diminished army, of 600 pieces of artillery. All this had to be drawn along by exhausted horses—horses already more than half worn out with hard marches and insufficient food. And to this vast convoy, as it had come from Moscow, there were now to be added, as best they might, some two thousand wounded, the result of the action at Malo-Jaroslawetz.

The country around them was so poor, and so thinly-peopled, as to afford little in the way of fresh supplies. Thus of the provisions brought from Moscow great part had been consumed in the week already passed, and it was calculated that scarce any would remain by the time the army reached Mojaisk. Moreover, no sooner had the army commenced its retreat than clouds of Cossacks began to hover round it with loud huzzas. They cut off all stragglers; they

intercepted all supplies. By these means the French, of the rear-guard especially, were reduced to a terrible strait. If they kept close to their ranks, they could obtain no food for themselves, no forage for their horses. If, on the other hand, they wandered far to the right or left, unless in large bands, each single soldier was sure to have the lance of a Cossack at his breast.

Even while the provisions brought from Moscow lasted, much suffering prevailed. They were most unequally distributed, says M. de Fezensac, like all things which proceed from pillage. One regiment had still some oxen for slaughter, but no bread; another regiment had flour, but wanted meat. Even in the same regiment there were similar diversities. Some companies were half-starved, and others lived in abundance. The chiefs enjoined an equal partition, but they were no match for individual selfishness; all means were used to blind their vigilance and elude their commands.

As if to add to the difficulties of this retreat, Napoleon, in his irritation against the Russians, issued a cruel order, which the French writers themselves have been forward to condemn. He directed that all the houses on the line of march should be burned down. Marshal Davoust, who commanded the rear-guard, and who on this occasion, as on every other, showed himself a consummate general, carried out these instructions with pitiless rigour. Detachments sent out to the right and left, as far as the pursuit of the enemy allowed them, set on fire the *châteaux* and the villages. The result was mainly to drive the Russian peasants to despair, and to aggravate the fate of the wounded and the prisoners who fell into their hands.

"The sight of this destruction," so writes M. de Fezensac, "was by no means the most painful of those which met our eyes. There was marching in front of us a column of Russian prisoners guarded by troops from the Confederation of the Rhine. Nothing was given out to these poor men for food except a little horseflesh; and the soldiers of the guard dashed out the brains of those who could march no further. We found their corpses lying on our route, and all with shattered heads. In justice to the soldiers of my regiment I must declare that the sight filled them with indignation. Moreover, they saw to what cruel reprisals this barbarous system might expose them."

Under these adverse circumstances we need not be surprised to find M. de Fezensac assuring us that, even in the first days, this retreat bore many symptoms of a rout. The divisions in the front pressed forward

every morning, leaving their baggage to follow as it could; and thus the rear-guard had to protect and defend the whole of an enormous convoy. Bridges, which broke down under the weight, had to be repaired; obstacles, as they gathered on a narrow road, had to be cleared away. It had been designed that the cavalry, under General Grouchy, should support this covering body, but its horses were so weak for want of forage, and its numbers dwindled so fast, that it could render no active service, and Marshal Davoust sent it forward, maintaining the rear with his infantry alone. He had reason to remember the retort which General Nansouty had made to the King of Naples (Murat), when, even in the advance upon Moscow, Murat complained of some remissness in a cavalry charge—"Our horses have no patriotism. The soldiers fight without bread, but the horses insist on oats!"

Nor was it the cavalry only. Since the draught-horses also began to fail, it became necessary, hour by hour, to blow up tumbrils of artillery, or to abandon carts piled with baggage and with wounded. The soldiers of the rear-guard, who were themselves struck down, had a grievous fate before them, since in their position a wound was almost equivalent to death. It was heartrending to hear these poor men, with loud cries, entreat their comrades at least to despatch them as they fell, rather than leave them to linger and perish, without aid, or until run through by a Cossack lance.

Napoleon himself took no heed of their calamities. Profoundly mortified at the compelled retreat, which there was no longer any side-march to conceal, he journeyed in front surrounded by his guard, and shut up in his *landau*, with the chief of his Staff, Marshal Berthier. He gave no personal impulse nor direction to the march, and contented himself with blaming Davoust, who, he said, was over-methodical and moved too slowly.

Amidst these growing difficulties three toilsome marches brought the *Grande Armée* to Mojaïsk. Thus far the days had continued fine, though the nights had begun to be frosty; and on their way the troops were rejoined by Mortier's division from Moscow. Mojaïsk itself could yield them no resources. That ill-fated little town had been burned, and its inhabitants had fled. The troops, therefore, bivouacked in the open air, skirting, as they passed, the plain of Borodino. Several officers rode over to revisit the field of battle; they found it, indeed, a ghastly scene. In that thinly-peo-

pled region, laid waste alternately by friend and foe, scarce any peasants had remained to fulfil the duty of interment, and the slain of both armies were still lying where they had fallen, half-decomposed by the lapse of time, or half-devoured by the birds and beasts of prey. Not less dismal than the scene itself were the reflections which it could not fail to inspire. Here then the French army, by its own account, had lost thirty thousand men in killed and wounded. Here, then, they had perished—and all for what result? Only that their surviving comrades, after a few weeks at Moscow, should march back as they came! Only for present grief and impending ruin!

At Krasnoi, where one *corps d'armée* encamped the same night, the spectacle was still more afflicting. It was a large monastic establishment, which the French had converted into a hospital after their Borodino battle. But such was the improvidence of their chiefs as they marched onwards to Moscow, that, as M. de Fezensac assures us, they had left the sick without medicines, nay, even without food. It was with great difficulty that some scanty supplies were from time to time gleaned in the neighbourhood, and that several convoys of convalescents were despatched to Smolensk. But many more had perished, and many yet remained. "I rescued three men belonging to my own regiment," says Fezensac, "but I found it very hard to make my way to them in their neglected state, since not only the staircases and the corridors, but even the centre of the rooms, were piled up with every kind of ordure."

Energetic orders were now issued by Napoleon for the transport of all among those who could bear removal, being about fifteen hundred in number. It was directed that every baggage-cart, and even every private carriage from Moscow, should take up one at least of these disabled men. By such means their removal was in the first instance secured, but the conveyances in question were already overloaded, while the strength of the draught-horses had rapidly declined.

Smolensk was now looked to by the troops as the term of all their sufferings and losses. There it was thought they would find ample supplies; there they might expect to take up winter-quarters. But from Smolensk they were still divided by eight or nine laborious marches, through a country almost destitute of resources, as having been laid waste by themselves in their advance. Nor was the Russian army at this time inactive. Marshal Kutusof had in the first instance been deceived as

to the direction of the French retreat, but he was now hanging on the flank of the invaders by a side-march of his own to Medouin; and he had, besides the Cossacks, despatched a strong division under one of his best officers, General Miloradowitch, which was well provided with artillery, and was prepared to engage the French rear-guard day by day.

It was under such adverse circumstances that the first *corps d'armée*, which still formed the French rear, resumed its harassing duties. On the 31st of October it marched half way to Ghjat, on the 1st of November to Ghjat itself. Next morning it was again in motion towards Smolensk. Marshal Davoust, destitute of cavalry, but confiding in his veteran foot-soldiers, continued to show, as they did, a truly heroic firmness. Each day they had to repel the impetuous charges of Miloradowitch, each evening to endure the privation of rest and of food. On the 1st there was a more especial accumulation at the passage of a small but slimy river and morass, where the bridge had broken down. It was necessary for the troops to maintain the conflict while the sappers re-established the bridge. All that night Marshal Davoust, with his generals and the soldiers of Gerard's Division, remained on foot, without eating or sleeping, to protect the rear of the retreating army.

Next day there was a more general engagement, in which the *corps d'armée* of Prince Eugene and of Marshal Ney also took part. The French remained victorious, but with the loss of fifteen or eighteen hundred of their best veterans. And on the evening of that well-fought day what refreshment was in store for them after all their toils and dangers? Let M. Thiers here reply. "When they entered the town of Wiasma they found no means of subsistence. The guard and the corps which passed first had devoured everything. Of the provisions brought from Moscow, there was nothing left. In a cold and dark night these exhausted men cast themselves down at the edge of the fir forests; they lit large fires, and they roasted some horse-flesh in the blaze."

Moreover, there had now begun to be in the midst of themselves—and it continued to increase through the retreat—a mingled mass of disbanded men; cavalry soldiers who had lost their horses, infantry soldiers who had flung away their muskets, men from almost every service and almost every country, now rendered desperate and callous by famine. Their sole remaining care

was to provide by any means for their personal safety, and, far from continuing to protect the rear-guard, they had themselves to be protected by it.

Thus beset and close pressed, the first corps, which had 72,000 men under arms when it crossed the Niemen, which had still 28,000 when it left Moscow, had dwindled to 15,000. The other corps were also much reduced, though not as yet in the same proportion. It was obvious that the army was now drawing along three or four times more cannon than, with its diminished numbers, it could ever use in action; and Marshal Davoust applied to the Emperor for permission to leave behind the superfluous pieces of artillery, in proportion as the horse-s failed. But this the pride of Napoleon forbade—by no means the only instance in which his indomitable spirit proved injurious to the welfare, nay, even to the preservation of his troops. Instead of cannon, therefore, the baggage-carts with the sick and wounded had to be relinquished hour after hour, while the tumbrils of ammunition more and more frequently had to be blown into the air.

Napoleon himself saw nothing at this time of the real difficulties of the retreat. Remaining a day's march in advance, in the midst of his guard, he was there for the most part, as M. Thiers describes him, seated in his carriage, *entre Berthier consterné et Murat éleint*. Sometimes he passed whole hours without uttering a word, absorbed in his own painful thoughts; and he commonly replied to the various representations of Marshal Davoust by a general order to march more rapidly. He persisted, says M. Thiers, in finding fault with the rear-guard instead of going himself to direct its operations.

It was partly, then, as dissatisfied, however unreasonably, with the conduct of the first corps, and partly as taking into account its exhausted state, that the Emperor now determined to withdraw it into the main body of his forces, committing the defence of the rear in its place to the third corps, under Marshal Ney. In that corps the fourth regiment of the line, commanded by Fezensac, came to occupy the post of the greatest danger and difficulty as the very last of the rear-guard.

This was on the 4th of November.

"Before the break of day next morning," says Fezensac, "the third corps was called to arms, and prepared to march. At that time all the soldiers who had disbanded left their bivouacs, and came to join us. Those among

them who were sick or wounded lingered near the fires, imploring us not to leave them in the enemy's hands. We had no means of transport for them, and we were obliged to pretend not to hear the wailings of those we were unable to relieve. As for the troop of wretches who had deserted their standards, although still able to bear arms, I ordered them to be repulsed with the butt ends of our muskets; and I forewarned them that, in the event of the enemy's attack, I would have them fired upon if they caused us the smallest obstruction."

On that same day, the 5th, Napoleon, with the vanguard, reached the small town of Dorogobuje. There he was assailed by cares of a different kind. He received despatches from Paris announcing the strange conspiracy of Malet—how an officer in prison could escape one night from his place of detention, could succeed in all the preliminary steps of revolution, could seize in their beds both General Savary, the Minister of Police, and General Hulin, the *commandant* of the city, and could seem on the point of raising the flag of a new republic. "*Mais quoi!*" exclaimed Napoleon several times after he had heard these news; "*on ne songeait donc pas à mon fils, à ma femme, aux institutions de l'Empire!*" And after each exclamation he relapsed again, says M. Thiers, into his painful thoughts, reflected and declared in his moody countenance.

The receipt of the same intelligence a few days later by some of the Emperor's suite is very graphically told by M. de Bausset. His memoirs, indeed, display a curious contrast to all others of the same place or period, coming forth with flashes of merriment in the midst of the darkest gloom. He informs us that on the morning of the 8th, still two marches from Smolensk, he found that during the night three of his carriage-horses had been stolen, and, as he supposed, already eaten by the soldiers. He bought some others to supply their place, but this operation delayed him, and he did not rejoin head-quarters till the most interesting moments of the day were passed.

"Les officiers de la Maison Impériale achevaient de dîner. Je m'étais assis, et me disposais à réparer le temps perdu, lorsque le Grand Maréchal (Duroc, Duc de Frioul), qui m'avait fait placer près de lui, me parla des nouvelles que l'estafette venait d'apporter. Mais la politique ne m'occupait guère. Il était question de la conspiration de Malet, de l'arrestation du Ministre de la Police et du Préfet de Police. Je croyais que le Grand Maréchal inventait ces nouvelles pour donner le change à la faim qui me consumait, car j'étais encore à jeun à sept

heures du soir. Je lui répondis en riant que le tonnerre tombât-il à côté de moi, je ne perdrais pas un seul instant pour me dédommager de la diète que j'avais subie toute la journée."

M. de Bausset owns, however, that when the newspapers from Paris were brought, and he saw the true state of the case, the mouthfuls began to stick in his throat.

We may add that M. de Bausset, as (in every sense) a prominent member of the Imperial household, appears to have been well cared for, even in the worst days of the retreat. Scarcely ever did he fail to find a corner at some Imperial table, or a seat at some Imperial *traineau*. By such means he could resist even a fit of the gout, which at this period most inopportunistly assailed him. Thus he was enabled to return to the Tuileries in good case; and when two days afterwards he appeared at the Imperial levée—

"L'Empereur me fit beaucoup de questions sur la manière dont j'avais quitté l'armée, et me dit, en souriant avec amertume, que j'étais probablement le seul qui n'eût pas maigri dans cette longue retraite."

Meanwhile, the French *corps d'armée*, front and rear, were eagerly pressing forward to Smolensk. They had, as we have seen, suffered much from privations of food and of rest, from the burned-out peasantry, and the ever-vigilant Cossacks. But the worst of their enemies was still to come. On the 4th of November there fell the first flakes of snow. On the 5th their quantity augmented. On the 6th they grew to a storm, and the ground assumed for the season its winter robe of white. Sir Robert Wilson, then at the Russian head-quarters, describes as having first arisen on the 6th "that razor-cutting wind which hardened the snow, and made it sparkle as it fell like small diamonds, whilst the air, under the effect of its contracting action, was filled with a continual ringing sound; and the atmosphere seemed to be rarefied till it became quite brisk and brittle."

The sufferings of the French soldiers, long-tried and exhausted as they were, now became wellnigh unendurable.

"At a late hour of the 7th," says M. de Fezensac, "we reached the open plain in front of Dorogobuje. It was by far the coldest night that we had felt as yet; the snow was falling thickly, and the violence of the wind was such that no light could be kindled: besides that, the heather amidst which we lay

would have afforded us but scanty materials for bivouac fires."

In this march, as in every other during this part of the retreat, Marshal Ney had set his troops the most gallant example: always among the hindmost, here the post of danger; often with a soldier's musket in his hand; and not only, like Marshal Davoust, unshaken in firmness, but unlike him, ever cheerful, light-hearted, and serene. Next morning, with the aid of another *corps d'armée*, he endeavoured to hold Dorogobuje for the day with the rearguard, so as to allow the corps in advance some time to save their artillery and baggage. But he found himself sharply assailed by the infantry of Miloradowitch. The enemy took the bridge across the Dnieper, and forced another post of Ney in front of the church. The French, after their night without food or fire, had to maintain the conflict knee-deep in the snow. By a bold charge they recovered the lost posts, but could not maintain them, and found it necessary to continue their retreat before it was cut off by the Russians.

With all this, the long-enduring soldiers of Napoleon, for the most part, did not fail in firmness, did not fail in patience, did not fail in attachment to their chief. Sir Robert Wilson says of the French, whom he saw as captives, that they could not be induced by any temptations, by any threats, by any privations, to cast reproach on their Emperor as the cause of their misfortunes and sufferings. It was "the chance of war," "unavoidable difficulties," and "destiny," but "not the fault of Napoleon." "The famished," adds Sir Robert, "dying of hunger, refused food rather than utter an injurious word against their chief to indulge and humour vindictive inquirers."

But how terrible the fate of these brave captives, as Sir Robert Wilson proceeds to relate it!

"All prisoners were immediately and invariably stripped stark naked and marched in columns in that state, or turned adrift to be the sport and the victims of the peasantry, who would not always let them, as they sought to do, point and hold the muzzles of the guns against their own heads or hearts to terminate their sufferings in the most certain and expeditious manner; for the peasantry thought that this mitigation of torture would be an offence against the avenging God of Russia, and deprive them of His further protection."

Sir Robert Wilson proceeds to give some particular instances, more life-like and

appalling perhaps than can be any general description, however clear and precise. One day, as he was riding forward with General Miloradowitch and his staff on the high road, about a mile from Wiasma, they found a crowd of peasant-women with sticks in their hands, hopping round a felled pine-tree, on each side of which lay about sixty naked prisoners prostrate, but with their heads on the tree, which these furies were striking in accompaniment to a national air or song, yelled by them in concert, while several hundred armed peasants were quietly looking on as guardians of the direful orgies. When the cavalcade approached, the sufferers uttered piercing shrieks, and kept incessantly crying, "*La mort, la mort, la mort!*"

Another afternoon, when Sir Robert was on the march with General Beningsen, they fell in with a column of 700 naked prisoners under a Cossack escort. This column, according to the certificate given on starting, had consisted of 1250 men, and the commandant stated that he had twice renewed it, as the original party dropped off from the prisoners he collected *en route*, and that he was then about completing his number again.

The meeting with this last miserable convoy was marked by one strange act of cold-blooded ferocity which Sir Robert has related. He tells it of a Russian officer "of high titular rank," without mentioning the name, but from a note preserved among his papers we learn that it was no other than the heir presumptive to the Crown, the Grand Duke Constantine. Sir Robert says that in this group of naked prisoners was a young man who kept a little aloof from the main band, and who attracted notice by his superior appearance. The Grand Duke, after entering into some conversation with him about his country, rank, and capture, asked him if he did not, under present circumstances, wish for death? "Yes," said the unhappy man, "I do, if I cannot be rescued, for I know I must in a few hours perish by hunger or by the Cossack lance, as I have seen so many hundreds of my comrades do before me. There are those in France who will lament my fate; and for their sake I should wish to return. But if that be impossible, the sooner this ignominy and suffering are over the better." To this the Grand Duke calmly answered that from the bottom of his heart he pitied the other's fate, but that aid for his preservation was impossible; if, however, he really wished to die at once and would lie down on his back, he, the Grand Duke, to give proof of

the interest he took in him, would himself inflict the death-blow on his throat!

General Beningsen was then at some little distance in front, but Sir Robert Wilson, who had stopped to hear the conversation, ventured to remonstrate with his Imperial Highness on the very peculiar proof of interest which he offered to give, urging the absolute necessity of saving the unfortunate French officer, after having excited hopes by engaging in a discourse with him. Sir Robert found, however, that the Grand Duke had no inclination to relinquish his first idea; upon which he eagerly spurred forward to overtake and bring back General Beningsen. But, happening to turn round before he could reach the General, he saw his Imperial Highness, who had dismounted, strike with his sabre a blow at the French officer that nearly severed the head from the body. Nor, adds Sir Robert, could the Grand Duke ever afterwards be made to understand that he had done a reprehensible thing. He defended it by the motive and by the relief which he had afforded to the sufferer, there being no means to save him, and, if there had been, no man daring to employ them.

Such was an early and no doubt sufficient token of that in-born ferocity of temper which many years afterwards Constantine more clearly brought to light as Governor of Poland, and which rendered necessary even to his own perception his resignation of his hereditary rights as eventual successor to the throne.

Far different, nay, directly opposite, were the sentiments of Alexander. When he received accounts from General Wilson and others of the frequent atrocities and various modes of torture practised by the peasantry, the Emperor at once by an express courier transmitted an order forbidding all such acts under the severest threats of his displeasure and punishment. At the same time he directed that a ducat in gold should be paid for every prisoner delivered up by peasant or soldier to any civil authority for safe custody. The decree was most humane and well worthy Alexander's just renown; yet in too many cases it remained only a dead letter. The conductors, as Sir Robert informs us, were frequently offered a higher price to surrender their charge as victims to private vengeance. Nor could the rage of the peasantry be at once restrained. How, indeed, expect mercy from men whose wives and children were at that time wandering helpless on the snow, their houses burned down perhaps by these very soldiers in consequence of Na-

oleon's command? Then it was that the utter impolicy of that command to set on fire all the villages in the line of retreat, its impolicy as well as its signal cruelty, grew manifest to all.

In this tremendous retreat more compassion was occasionally shown by dogs than by men:—

"Innumerable dogs," thus writes Sir Robert Wilson, "crouched on the bodies of their former masters, looking in their faces, and howling their hunger and loss. Others, on the contrary, were tearing the still living flesh from the feet, hands, and limbs of still living wretches who could not defend themselves, and whose torment was still greater as in many cases their consciousness and senses remained unimpaired."

One particular instance is added. At the commencement of the retreat, at a village near Selino, a detachment of fifty French had been surprised. The peasants resolved to bury them alive in a pit; a drummer-boy bravely led the devoted party and sprang into the grave. A dog belonging to one of the victims could not be secured. Every day this dog went to the neighbouring camp and came back with a bit of food in his mouth to sit and moan over the newly-turned earth. It was a fortnight before he could be killed by the peasants, who were afraid of discovery. "They showed me the spot," adds Wilson, "and related the occurrence with exultation, as though they had performed a meritorious deed."

Ghastly, most ghastly, must have been the line of the French retreat, as the notes of Sir Robert describe it:—

"From that time the road was strewed with guns, tumbrils, equipages, men, and horses; for no foraging parties could quit the high-road in search of provisions; and consequently the debility hourly increased. Thousands of horses soon lay groaning on the route, with great pieces of flesh cut off their necks and most fleshy parts by the passing soldiery for food; whilst thousands of naked wretches were wandering like spectres who seemed to have no sight or sense, and who only kept reeling on till frost, famine, or the Cossack lance put an end to their power of motion. In that wretched state no nourishment could have saved them. There were continual instances, even amongst the Russians, of their lying down, dozing, and dying within a quarter of an hour after a little bread had been supplied."

We should observe that it was not only from want of forage or from fatigue that

such numbers of French horses fell. There was also another cause pointed out with exultation by their enemy. Thus, on the morning of the 5th, on coming to the first bivouac which the French had left, some Cossacks in attendance on Sir Robert Wilson, seeing a gun and several tumbrils at the bottom of a ravine with the horses lying on the ground, dismounted, and, taking up the feet of several, hallooed, and ran to kiss Sir Robert's knees and horse, making all the while fantastic gestures like crazy men. When their ecstasy had a little subsided, they pointed to the horses' shoes, and said, "God has made Napoleon forget that there is a winter in our country. In spite of Kutusof the enemy's bones shall remain in Russia."

It was soon ascertained that the needful precaution of *roughing* had been neglected with all the horses of the Imperial army, except only those of the Polish corps and also the Emperor's own, which Coulaincourt (Duke de Vicence), under whom was that department, had, with due foresight, always kept rough-shod according to the Russian usage.

Such is the positive statement of Sir Robert Wilson, who was upon the spot at the time. But it is only just to observe that there are some remarks of the Duke of Wellington which point to an exactly opposite conclusion:—

"Then we are told that the loss was occasioned because the French horses were not rough-shod. . . . But the excuse is not founded in fact. Those who have followed a French army well know that their horses are always rough-shod. It is the common mode of shoeing horses in France; and in this respect a French army ought to, and would have, suffered less inconvenience than any army that ever was assembled."

As though these manifold causes of distress did not suffice, the French soldiers at this period also suffered severely from the want of warm clothes. When they had marched forward in the months of July and August the weather was extremely hot. They were glad to leave stored up in Poland their heavy capotes and their woollen trowsers. They expected that the care of their chiefs would provide them with winter necessities before the winter came. In that expectation they found themselves deceived. No stores of comfortable clothing met them on their homeward march. They had found, indeed, fur-dresses among the spoils of the burning capital, but had for the most part sold them to their officers. Either therefore

they had to wrap themselves in any garments, sometimes even female garments, which they happened to have brought from Moscow, or else to endure as best they might the growing severity of the cold. On the 9th of November Réaumur's thermometer fell in that region to 12° below zero, equivalent to 5° of Fahrenheit, and on the 12th to 17°, or according to Fahrenheit 6°, below zero. "Many men," adds Sir Robert Wilson, "were frozen to death, and great numbers had their limbs, noses, and cheeks frozen."

With two such facts before us—the neglect to rough-shoe the horses except those for the Emperor's use, and the omission of effective measures for the despatch in due time of the winter clothing—we must own ourselves unable to concur in the panegyrics on the Emperor's far-sighted policy, his close attention to details, and his provident care for his army, which are poured forth by his indiscriminate admirers even as to this campaign. That Napoleon possessed these qualities in a most eminent degree, we should be among the last persons to deny. But we must be allowed to think that he by no means evinced these qualities in the orders for his Moscow retreat. It would seem as if a long period of splendid successes and of uncontrolled authority had a tendency to perplex and unsettle even the highest faculties of mind. How else explain that Napoleon showed so little prescience of the coming Russian winter, as though by *ignoring* its approach that approach would be really delayed?

We may observe that the French eye-witnesses describe the horrors of this retreat in quite as vivid terms as either the Russians or the English. Thus speaks M. de Fezensac of the period between Dorogobuje and Smolensk:—

"Since we were at the rearguard, all the men who left the road in quest of food fell into the hands of the enemy, whose pursuit grew day by day more active. The severity of the cold came to augment our difficulties and sufferings. Many soldiers, exhausted with fatigue, flung away their muskets to walk singly. They halted wherever they found a piece of wood for burning, by which they could cook a morsel of horse-flesh or a handful of flour, if, indeed, none of their comrades came and snatched from them these their sole remaining resources. For our soldiers, dying of hunger, took by force from all the disbanded men whatever provisions they bore, and the latter might deem themselves fortunate if they were not also despoiled of their clothes. Thus, after having laid waste this entire region, we were now reduced to destroy each other; and this extreme course had become a necessity of war. It was requisite at all

hazards to preserve those soldiers who had continued true to their standard, and who alone at the rearguard sustained the enemy's assaults. As for those disbanded men who no longer belonged to any regiment, and could no longer render any service, they had no claim at all on our pity. Under these circumstances the road along which we journeyed bore the likeness of a field of battle. Soldiers who had resisted cold and fatigue succumbed to the torments of hunger; others who had kept a few provisions found themselves too much enfeebled to follow the march, and remained in the enemy's power. Some had their limbs frozen, and expired where they had dropped down on the snow; others fell asleep in villages and perished in the flames which their own companions had kindled. I saw at Dorogobuje a soldier of my regiment upon whom destitution had produced the same effects as drunkenness; he was close to us without knowing us again; he asked us where was his regiment; he mentioned by name other soldiers, and spoke to them as though to strangers; his gait was tottering, and his looks were wild. He disappeared at the beginning of the action, and I never saw him again. Several *cantinières* and soldiers' wives belonging to the regiments which preceded us in the line of march were in our midst. Several of these poor women had a young child to carry; and notwithstanding the egotism then so prevalent among us, every one was eager in rendering them his aid. Our drum-major bore for a long time an infant in his arms. I also during several days gave places to a woman and her baby in a small cart that I still had; but what could such feeble succour avail against so many sufferings, or could we alleviate the calamities which we were condemned to share?"

Instances like these of tenderness and kindly feeling appear, we think, doubly touching, doubly admirable, in the midst of such wide-spread and terrible woe. In a later passage of his journal, Fezensac commemorates the fate of an officer of his regiment who had married in France before the commencement of this fatal campaign. Worn out with fatigue, he was found dead one morning by the side of a bivouac-fire, still holding the miniature of his wife close-pressed upon his heart.

Such, then, was the march to Smolensk. Of that city, as it appeared in 1778 and continued till 1812, a full description may be found in Coxe's Travels. He says that, though by no means the most magnificent, it was by far the most singular town he had ever seen. But to the French, in November 1812, the name bore a fanciful charm as Eldorado in old times to the Spaniards. Smolensk! Smolensk! was now the general cry. Smolensk was to supply all their wants; Smolensk was to be the term of their

retreat. Every eye was eagerly strained to catch the first glimpse of its antique towers, crowning its two irregular hills, and emerging from the vast plains of wintry snow.

But alas for these two sanguine hopes! From the difficulties which had been found of transport, and the want of precise orders as to the line of homeward march, the magazines of this city were by no means such as had been expected and announced. They would afford resources for a halt of days, but not for a sojourn of months.

Napoleon, at the head of the foremost corps, reached Smolensk on the 9th of November. He gave orders that ample distributions should be made to his Guards, and that the gates should be shut against the other divisions of his army as they came. But it was found impossible to maintain that exclusion. The late comers—some of whom had so recently fought and bled and endured every extremity of hardship for the protection of their vanguard—would not bear to be shut out. They burst through the gates, and, finding no progress made in the distributions of food that were promised them, they next broke open the magazines. "*On pille les magasins!*" was the cry that now arose in the French ranks. Every soldier rushed to the scene to secure his own part in the plunder. It was some time ere order could be restored, and the remnant of provisions be saved for the corps of Davoust and Prince Eugene. The rear under Ney was even less fortunate. Having had on the 11th another fierce conflict to sustain against the Russians, it did not appear before Smolensk till the 14th. By that time everything had been wasted or devoured. "When I went into the city," says Fezensac, "I could find nothing at all for my regiment or myself. We had to resign ourselves to our dismal prospect of continuing our march without any distribution of food."

At Smolensk, however, Napoleon roused himself from the lethargy which, as M. Thiers admits, seems to have benumbed him during the first days of the retreat. He made strenuous efforts to re-organise his army, but found the main causes of its dissolution beyond his control. The division of Prince Eugene, marching a little to the northward, had lost nearly all its artillery at the encumbered and disastrous passage of a small river, the Vop. Altogether 380 pieces of cannon had been taken or left behind. The fighting men in rank and file were now less than one-half of what they had been when the army left Moscow. On the other hand, some reinforcements ap-

peared at Smolensk, both of horse and foot, belonging to the division of General Baraguay d'Hilliers, and these Napoleon distributed among the several corps so as in some degree to recruit their far-diminished numbers.

Besides the argument to be derived from the failing magazines, there were other strong reasons against a continued sojourn at Smolensk. Napoleon had received unfavourable accounts from both his flanks. On his right, as it became in his homeward movement, the Russian General Wittgenstein had repulsed St. Cyr, had retaken Polotsk, and was marching south. On the left the Russians had succeeded in concluding a peace with Turkey, so that Admiral Tchitchakof, who commanded their army in that quarter, had become free of his movements, and was marching north. It was not difficult to conjecture whether these two chiefs were separately tending. About half-way between Smolensk and Wilna rolls a wide river, the Beresina, so rapid in its stream as not to be readily congealed by the first frosts. The bridge across that river, in the line of the French retreat, lay at the little town of Borisow. If, then, either Wittgenstein or Tchitchakof could reach this position and seize it before Napoleon — still more if both could be combined — the French retreat would be intercepted, and the French army, including its Emperor, might be compelled to lay down its arms.

Conscious that there was no time to lose in continuing the retreat, Napoleon set out from Smolensk on the 14th at the head of his Guards. But seeing how much the other divisions which had arrived after him stood in need of rest, he gave orders that they should depart successively on the 15th and 16th, while Ney, who commanded the last, and had to complete the evacuation of the city, should remain till the morning of the 17th. By this system three days' march would intervene between the front of the army and its rear. It was a wise course so far as the refreshment of the troops was concerned, but not judicious, inasmuch as it overlooked the fact that, by the recent enormous losses of the French army, the Russians had come to exceed it in numbers. It was not hard to foresee that Kutusof, if he found his enemies thus disseminated, would endeavour to cut off their divisions in detail.

This is precisely what in fact occurred. The Russian army, moving forward while the French was taking rest, had advanced to Krasnoi, two marches beyond Smolensk, and occupied a strong position on the side

of a steep ravine through which the French would have to pass. When Napoleon appeared at that defile, on the afternoon of the 15th, the Russians had not yet completed their preparations, and allowed the French to go through. But when, on the 16th, there came up the division of Prince Eugene, it was confronted by an iron wall of soldiers and by ranges of cannon ready to play. Eugene charged these obstacles with his usual gallantry, but without success; and he saw in a short time the ground strewn with two thousand of his men; dead or wounded, it was much the same, since none of the latter could be moved. He found it requisite at night to attempt a side-march to the right, avoiding the ravine by the plain along the Dnieper, and thus (his men treading softly on the snow) he was enabled, after heavy loss, to rejoin the Emperor at Krasnoi.

The difficulties of this day appear to have convinced Napoleon of the error he had committed in the dissemination of his army. Early on the 17th he marched back from Krasnoi to the ravine, and drew out the Guards in battle-order ready to support the division of Davoust. By such aid Davoust, though sharply beset, was enabled to effect his junction. But both he, and Prince Eugene the day before, lost in that perilous pass the greater part of their remaining artillery and baggage.

There was no further time to lose. On the 14th the Réaumur thermometer had fallen to 20 degrees below zero, that is to 13 below zero of Fahrenheit. Since then, however, there had been some remission of the cold, and even some commencement of a thaw. It was doubtful whether the ice upon the Dnieper would be firm enough to bear the weight of cannon and baggage, or even of horses and men. It became therefore of primary importance to secure the bridge across that river at the little town of Orcha, and in the due line of the retreat. Orcha was two marches from Krasnoi, and the Russians, of whom a large body was already in movement towards that post, would undoubtedly seize and hold it unless they were anticipated by the French.

In this exigency, Napoleon set forth in all haste at the head of his Guards, and he did succeed in reaching Orcha in sufficient time. He left to Marshal Davoust two orders; the one to keep close to Mortier, who commanded the hindmost division of the Guards; the other to support and sustain the advance of Marshal Ney. These orders were in fact contradictory, and Napoleon must have felt that they were so,

but he was unwilling to take upon himself in explicit terms the terrible responsibility of leaving to their fate Marshal Ney and the whole rearguard. Davoust, in this choice of difficulties, deemed it — and he probably was right — the superior duty to rejoin the main body, and he accordingly marched onward to Orcha. Worse still, he was prevented, by the want of safe communication, from sending any notice to Ney of his intended departure.

Ney therefore remained entirely ignorant of the extreme peril to which he was exposed. He marched forward on the morning of the 17th, having first, according to his orders, blown up the defences of Smolensk and set the buildings on fire — orders that certainly had not in any measure consulted the welfare of the numerous French, sick and wounded, who in this very town were left in the enemy's hands. Next day he came up with the Russian army at the defile in front of Krasnoi. He made a most gallant charge, and trusted to force his way, but his division was only of six thousand men with six pieces of cannon; while the Russians had wellnigh fifty thousand men with large well-appointed batteries. Notwithstanding the intrepidity of his veterans, the result could not be doubtful. He was repulsed with heavy loss; and in the evening he received a flag of truce from General Miloradowitch, offering him a capitulation on most honourable terms. He now learnt that the other French divisions were already at or near Orcha, and that he was separated from them by the Russian army intervening, by the river Dnieper, and by more than fifteen leagues of distance. How many commanders in his place would have utterly despaired!

But the constancy of Ney was unshaken. He vouchsafed no answer at all to the flag of truce; only he retained the officer lest Miloradowitch should gather any news of his design. Towards sunset he set his troops in movement through the open fields to his right. In these critical moments, says Fezensac, his countenance showed neither irresolution nor uneasiness; all eyes were turned to him, but no one for a long time presumed to put him any question. At length, seeing near him one of his officers — perhaps Fezensac himself — the following dialogue passed, which Fezensac relates: —

"Le Maréchal lui dit à demi-voix: "*Nous ne sommes pas bien.*" — "*Qu'allez vous faire?*" répondit l'officier. — "*Passer le Dnieper.*" — "*Où est le chemin?*" — "*Nous le trouverons.*" — "*Et s'il n'est pas gelé?*" — "*Il le sera.*" —

"*A la bonne heure!*" dit l'officier. Ce singulier dialogue, que je rapporte textuellement, révéla le projet du Maréchal de gagner Orcha par la rive gauche du fleuve, et assez rapidement pour y trouver encore l'armée qui faisait son mouvement par la rive gauche."

To carry out this daring design, the first object — marching in the dark and across fields — was to find the river. Marshal Ney, with the ready instinct of a good commander, that knows how to derive aid even from the most trifling circumstances, seeing some ice before him, ordered it to be broken, and observed the direction of the water that ran beneath, rightly concluding that the streamlet must be one of the Dnieper confluenta. Guided by this indication he reached the river's bank, and found there a small village. Happily for his object the river was found to be frozen — sufficiently at least to bear men, and even with great precaution some horses, though not artillery or baggage. It was also judged impossible to convey any further the wounded made in the action of that morning, who were accordingly left behind in spite of their entreaties and cries. In that manner, towards midnight, the Dnieper was successfully passed, and the troops without further respite resumed their march. Before daylight they came to another village, where they found a party of Cossacks fast asleep; these were taken prisoners or put to the sword.

Weary as were the soldiers, their safety — and they knew it — was entirely dependent on their pushing on. They met some parties of Cossacks, who however retired before them. At mid-day they came to two more villages, upon a height, where they were happy in finding some provisions. But in the afternoon it was no longer an outpost or two of the enemy with which they had to deal; Platof and all his Cossacks were upon them. Exhausted as they were by fatigue, and inferior in numbers, it became necessary for them to quit the track, so as to avoid the risk of a cavalry charge, and to move along the pine-woods that bordered the Dnieper on that side. Darkness came, and still they struggled on beneath the trees, often separated from each other, and under circumstances when a wound might be deemed equivalent to death. M. de Fezensac has described the scene as only an eyewitness could: —

"Les Cosaques nous criaient de nous rendre, et tiraient à bout-portant au milieu de nous; ceux qui étaient frappés restaient abandonnés. Un sergent eut la jambe fracassée d'un coup de

carabine. Il tomba à côté de moi, en disant froidement à ses camarades : *Voilà un homme perdu ; prenez mon sac ; vous en profiterez.* On prit son sac, et nous l'abandonnâmes en silence. Deux officiers blessés eurent le même sort. . . . Tel qui avait été un héros sur le champ de bataille paraissait alors inquiet et troublé."

Still more evil was their plight when the pine-woods ended, and they had to stagger onwards through the open country, painfully climbing several steep ravines, and exposed not only to the enemy's horsemen, but to his field artillery. For the greater part of the next day, Marshal Ney took position on a height and stood on the defensive. It was not till the return of darkness that he resumed his toilsome march. Meanwhile he had sent forward a Polish officer to make his way if possible to Orcha, and announce to the French chiefs his approach.

During this time, at the French headquarters, Napoleon, having secured his passage of the Dnieper, looked back with extreme anxiety to his gallant and forsaken rearguard. He took up his own quarters some leagues onward on the Boriso-v road, but instructed Prince Eugene and Davoust to remain one or two days longer at Orcha, ready, if there were still any possibility of aid, to succour Ney. Under these circumstances the two chiefs welcomed with most heart-felt delight the news which the Polish officer brought them. Prince Eugene at once led forth a part of his division to receive and welcome *le brave des braves*. Thus when, at one league from Orcha, the first men of Ney's feeble column saw close before them a body of troops, they found with inexpressible joy their cry of *Qui vive ?* answered in French. Another moment and Ney and Eugene were locked in each other's arms. One must have passed, says de Fezensac, as we had, three days between life and death, to judge in full measure of the ecstasy which this meeting gave us.

Nor was Napoleon himself less elated. M. de Bausset was then in attendance upon him at the country house of Branouï, some leagues beyond Orcha, and he bears witness to the pangs of suspense which the Emperor endured. At length the good news of Ney's safety came. They were brought by General Gourgaud — the same who subsequently shared the captivity of St. Helena. Napoleon, who was then sitting at breakfast, showed the most lively satisfaction. "*J'ai plus de quatre cent millions dans les caves des Tuileries ; je les aurais donnés avec reconnaissance pour la*

rançon de mon fidèle compagnon d'armes." Such were the words he spoke ; or as M. de Bausset puts it more in a Lord Chamberlain's style, "*Tels sont les mots que j'entendis sortir de la bouche de l'Empereur.*"

The triumph of Ney, however, was dearly bought. Of the six thousand men with whom he had marched out of Smolensk he brought less than one thousand to Orcha. But he had maintained the glory of his eagles ; he had spared a French Marshal and a French corps d'armée the dishonour of capitulation.

The losses sustained by the divers French corps at Krasnoi, and in the two marches beyond it, are computed by the French writers at ten or twelve thousand men, in killed, wounded, and prisoners. Of the whole *Grande Armée* there remained at Orcha no more than 24,000 men in rank and line, and about an equal number of disbanded soldiers partly without arms. The cavalry was almost extinct. In this extremity, Napoleon formed the greater number of the officers who still retained a horse into a body-guard, which he called *l'Escadron Sacré*. Here the Captains took the part of privates and the Colonels of subalterns, while the Generals served as regimental chiefs.

Thus far diminished, and still diminishing, the mass pursued its dismal movement to the Beresina. There was now a thaw, and the soldiers, with worn-out shoes and with the trees dripping down upon them, toiled painfully along through the mire. Every day was marked with some new incident, evincing, more than could any general description, the extremities that they endured. At Liady, for instance — but this was even before Orcha — some three hundred men of the First Corps, clustering together, had lain down in a barn for their night's rest. But the barn caught fire, and these poor men had become so linked and entangled one with the other that none could escape. Only one was found half dead, but still breathing, and he in mercy was despatched with two musket-balls.

Another day upon the march the troops observed some combs of honey near the summit of a lofty tree. There were no side-branches, and to climb seemed a perilous venture ; nevertheless some soldiers, thinking they might as well die of a fall as of famine, made the attempt and reached the place. Then they threw down the combs by morsels, on which their comrades below ravenously pounced, "like so many famished hounds," says Fezensac, who was present at this painful scene.

The Emperor was now looking forward to a junction on the Beresina with two of his *corps d'armée* — those of Marshal Oudinot and Marshal Victor — coming from the flank army on his north. The two Marshals had sustained some heavy losses, but could still bring him, together, at least 25,000 excellent soldiers. On the other hand, he could no longer indulge the hope of securing without obstacle the passage of the river. The Russians under Tchitchakof had reached Borisow, routed the Polish garrison, and burnt the Beresina bridge. It would be requisite to span the river at some other point by a new bridge as rapidly as possible, and unperceived by the Russians. And here the improvidence of the arrangements for this retreat become once more apparent. There was with the army an excellent veteran officer of engineers, General Eblé. There were under his command some scores of experienced pontoniers. There was a double pontoon train (sixty in number) which was left at Orcha in the advance to Moscow, and which was found still at Orcha on the return. General Eblé earnestly pressed Napoleon to take forward at least fifteen of these pontoons, so as to secure within two or three hours the construction of a bridge, should any be found needful. But this the pride of the Emperor forbade. He preferred that the fresh draught-horses ready at Orcha for this service should be employed in dragging onward some more pieces of artillery. All that could be obtained by General Eblé was authority to transport materials for the far less expeditious *pont de chevalets*. It was almost surreptitiously that he added six tumbrils, containing the necessary tools and implements.

Yet, as it proved, it was solely on these *chevalets* — on these tools and implements — that the safety of the whole depended. There is no exaggeration in saying that but for them every man of the *Grande Armée* must have laid down his arms. For on the 24th the weather changed and the frost returned, though not in its full severity; consequently during the next few days the Beresina proved to be in the state of all others most unfavourable for a passage — not bound fast by frost, and on the other hand not free from floating ice. When with great difficulty and some good fortune a ford was discovered at Studianka, several leagues to the north of Borisow, it appeared that only men on horseback could pass, and that with extreme risk, since the huge blocks whirled along by the current would

often strike down and overwhelm both horse and man.

Studianka was seized by a French detachment, while the Russians were amused by a feint of Napoleon at Borisow. Some cavalry soldiers, each taking another man behind him, rode boldly through the ford and secured the opposite bank. Then on the 25th General Eblé commenced the construction of a double bridge — the one for the artillery and baggage, the other for the horse or men on foot. The brave pontoniers, faithful to the voice of their admirable chief, plunged into the icy stream and continued at their work through the night. It was not merely the icy stream and the winter season — it was not merely the toil by night and day — but these much-enduring men had no nourishing food, no fermented drinks, to sustain them — not one ounce of bread, not one spoonful of brandy. There was only some hot broth made of horseflesh, and without salt, which was served out to them from time to time.

By unremitting exertions on the part of these devoted soldiers the bridges were completed in the course of the 26th, and the passage began. Meanwhile the Russians, at length apprised of Napoleon's real design, made some furious onsets on his rear, which, however, was well supported by the newly-arrived corps of Oudinot and Victor. These two Marshals here sustained a heavy loss of men, which the diminished army could ill spare. Nor could the passage be effected without further hindrance and delay. Several of the *chevalets* sank beneath the weight and were submerged. It became necessary again and again to send back into the water the heroic pontoniers, quivering as they were with cold, and faint with unsatisfied hunger. The icicles which gathered round their shoulders as they worked and which tore their flesh caused them cruel pain, and many were struck and maimed by the floating blocks; but still the survivors persevered.

General Eblé, in spite of his advanced years, had by no means spared himself, but plunged like his men into the fatal stream. He paid the penalty of his noble conduct a few weeks afterwards, dying in the military hospital at Königsberg of a *fièvre de congélation* — a dreadful malady, not confined to those who had suffered from frost or cold, but contagious as the plague, and in which, after grievous suffering, the limbs seem to lose their vital power and to rot away. Many of his pontoniers underwent the like or even an earlier doom. Of about one

hundred who had wrought in these waters at his call, it is stated by M. Thiers that ultimately no more than twelve survived.

Such of our readers as are conversant with the lighter literature of modern France, will no doubt remember the great skill with which M. de Balzac, in his "*Médecin de Campagne*," has portrayed *Gondrin*, whom he describes as the last of these Beresina pontoniers. How true to nature the complaint of the untaught man against those who have obtained promotion over his head, *les intriguans qui savent lire et écrire!* and how graphic his account of the clerks at the War Office, "*ces gens qui passent leur vie à se chauffer dans les bureaux! Ils m'ont demandé mes papiers! 'Mes papiers?' leur ai-je dit, mais c'est le vingt-neuvième bulletin.*"

We return to the Beresina. Although two days, the 27th and 28th, were devoted to the passage, it was but imperfectly effected; for, besides the occasional breaking down of the bridges and the necessity for fresh repairs, the access to them was constantly impeded by the tangled mass of carts and carriages. Many of these were upset—many others crushed together, or pushed forward into the river. It was a scene of indescribable confusion, evincing that fierce selfishness which long suffering produces. There was the explosion of tumbrils carelessly ignited—there was the stamp of horses rushing wildly through the crowd—there was the wail of women and children—there was the crash of the artillery pressed onward by the cannoniers over the living and the dead. On that last day, moreover, the French troops had to sustain, not on one bank only of the river but on both, the repeated and desperate onsets of the Russians.

The French positions however were, as usual, most gallantly maintained. Only one division, that of General Partouneaux, missing its route and surrounded by twenty times its numbers, was compelled to lay down its arms. But Marshal Victor, who had held the effective rearguard covering the bridges, was enabled to cross the Beresina unmolested after nightfall. Then, the whole army having passed, it became of urgent importance to destroy the bridges on the morning of the 29th, so as to prevent, or at all events delay, the Russian pursuit. There then still remained upon the eastern side a confused multitude, comprising the weakest and most helpless of the camp-followers, and numbering it was thought between 6000 and 8000. Napoleon had sent directions to fire the trains at seven in the morning; but the kind-hearted Eblé, anxious to save some more from that multitude

beyond, who with eager efforts were now feebly struggling across the encumbered bridges, delayed the order on his own responsibility until nearly nine: then, seeing the enemy advancing and ready to pass, he—turning aside his head not to view the grievous scene—gave the fatal word. Instantly the two bridges blew up, with all the poor wretches upon them. Then, even amidst the roar of the explosion, there arose from the opposite shore the wild and despairing shriek of the people left behind. Wounded men and helpless women, and half-unconscious little children, were seen with bitter tears to stretch forth their arms in last farewell towards their countrymen, compelled by a dire necessity to leave them to their doom. Many flung themselves madly upon the fragments of the flaming bridges—others as madly dashed into the river. As to the main mass their fate was soon decided. The hovering Cossacks, seeing them forsaken, darted down at full gallop upon them. They speared as though in playful mood the first of the crowd they came upon, and the rest they drove before them at their lance's point, like a flock of sheep. How many may have lived through the miseries of that captivity is known to God alone; but it is believed that scarce any of the number ever again beheld their native land.

Meanwhile the French army, or rather the sad remains of it, pursued its dreary route to Wilna, still fifty-four leagues distant. It was as usual, harassed and beset by swarms of Cossacks, but was faintly pursued on the part of the Russian Generals, who must have felt reluctant to suffer further losses of their men while the elements were warring on their side. The frost had become more rigorous than ever, the thermometer of Réaumur having fallen on some occasions so low as thirty degrees below zero, equivalent to thirty-five below zero of Fahrenheit. Such extremity of cold can be ill endured by men from a milder clime, even when provided with warm beds and nourishing food. What agony, then, must it have inflicted on that famishing crowd, compelled in many cases to make their pillows of mounds of snow!

Sir Robert Wilson, who was present in the Russian camp, has well described the scene. "The sky," he says, "was generally clear, and there was a subtle, keen, razor-cutting, creeping wind, that penetrated skin, muscle, and bone to the very marrow, rendering the surface as white and the whole limb affected as fragile as alabaster. Sometimes there was a *foudroyant* seizure

that benumbed at once the whole frame." It is no wonder, then, that Sir Robert should proceed to state of the French troops, "A general recklessness confounded all ranks, command ceased, and it became a *saute qui peut* at a funeral pace."

Not at all more favourable is the account of the French themselves. M. de Fezensac declares that this period was the most disastrous of the whole retreat:—

"Let any one," he says, "conceive the sight of plains as far as the eye could extend, all covered with snow—long forests of pine-trees—villages half burned down and deserted—and in the midst of these dismal scenes an immense column of suffering wretches, nearly all without arms, marching pell-mell, and falling again and again upon the ice by the side of their dead horses and dead comrades. Their faces bore the impress of extreme dejection, nay, despair; their eyes were quenched, their features decomposed and quite black with grime and smoke. Strips of sheepskin or pieces of cloth served them instead of shoes; their heads were swathed round with tatters; and their shoulders covered with horse-cloths, women's petticoats, or half-scorched hides. All such means of warmth had their value; for, whenever any man fell from fatigue, his comrades, at once, and without waiting for his death, despoiled him of his rags for themselves to wear. Each nightly bivouac came to resemble a battle-field the next morning, and one was wont to find dead at one's side the men next to whom one had lain down the evening before."

Even the Imperial *cortège* had a share in these terrible sufferings. M. de Fezensac, who came up with it on the 3d of December, between Ilia and Molodetschno, declares that no one who remembered its splendour at the beginning of the campaign would have known it again. The Guard was marching with disordered ranks and with sorrowing and reproachful faces. The Emperor was shut up in a carriage with the Prince de Neufchatel (Berthier). Behind him followed a small number of equipages, of led horses, and of mules—the scanty remnant from such great disasters. The aides-de-camp of Napoleon, as well as those of Berthier, walked on foot, holding by the bridle their horses, which could scarcely keep upright. Sometimes, to obtain a little rest, they sat behind the Emperor's carriage. In the midst of this sad procession feebly tottered a crowd of disabled men pell-mell from all the regiments, while the gloomy forest of pines through which it was winding appeared like a black frame around the dismal picture.

Even here the gaiety of M. de Bausset

does not quite forsake him. He states that the civilians in the Emperor's train were exposed to the enemy's attack about this time, when having once by accident outstripped their ordinary escort they found themselves surrounded by Cossacks. But they called for aid to the brave Belliard, *Colonel-Général des Dragons*, who, though wounded, sprang from his carriage, and, gathering some soldiers round him, put "the birds of prey" to flight. The costume of the General, as he had assumed it for warmth, is here described. He wore over his uniform a lady's spencer of pink satin, well lined inside with fur. Before their flight the Cossacks had, however, some time for plunder; they bore away *les papiers de la Chancellerie*, and also *les provisions de bouche* secured for that day to the auditors: *C'était faire la plus grande perte possible dans la position où nous étions*. This terrible loss of his expected meal appears to have roused the Lord Chamberlain to a most unusual frenzy. "*C'est la seule fois dans ma vie que je me sois senti saisi de l'envie d'atteindre un ennemi!*"

A more amiable feature in M. de Bausset's character was his constant kindness to the unfortunate actors and actresses who had been under his direction at Moscow. Many of them dropped off during the retreat, and M. de Bausset never heard of them again. Madame Bursay, the *directrice*, evinced a lofty courage. She was intent on saving two things—first, a young lady and friend of her troop, Madame André; and secondly, a manuscript poem of her own "*De la Médiocrité*," from which she expected future fame. M. de Bausset relates how beyond Krasnoi the wheels of the carriage that conveyed them were dashed to pieces by the enemy's cannon-balls, upon which Madame Bursay made her way on foot to the head-quarters at Liady, supporting in her arms and almost carrying her companion, who had swooned and was half dead with fear. They arrived before the bivouac fire at one in the morning, Madame Bursay still firmly clutching her poem "*De la Médiocrité*," *qu'elle tenait roulé dans sa main comme un Maréchal d'Empire aurait tenu son bâton de commandement*. The influence of De Bausset obtained for these ladies two remaining places in a *fourgon impérial*, and they succeeded, amidst many other dangers, in passing the Beresina and in reaching France. But the health of Madame André had failed from so much hardship, and she died within two months of her return.

Other escapes there were, as Fezensac reports them, truly marvellous amidst such

scenes, and evincing in many cases the utmost sympathy and kindness from the poor perishing soldiers. One man, a drummer in the 7th, led his sick wife, a *cantinière* of the same regiment, in a small horse-car from Moscow to Smolensk. There the horse died, and the man yoked himself to the car in the horse's place. Incredible as the effort seems, he drew on his wife all the way to Wilna, and, her sickness having then increased so as to prevent any further removal, he chose, rather than proceed alone, to become a joint prisoner with her. Another poor woman, a *cantinière* of the 33d, had set out from Moscow with her little daughter only six months old. This child, wrapped in a fur cloak taken at Moscow, she bore safely through all that famished march, feeding her only with a paste made of horse's blood. Twice she was lost by her mother, and twice was she recovered — the first time lying in a field, and the second time in a burned-down village with a mattress for her couch. At the Beresina her mother, finding both bridges at the time obstructed, passed the river on horseback with the water up to her neck, grasping with one hand the bridle, and with the other holding the child upon her head. Thus by a succession of marvels — it might almost be said of miracles — the little girl completed the entire retreat without any accident, and did not even catch cold.

Cases of such tender care amidst such terrible sufferings — cases which do honor to the French character, and even, it may be said, to human nature itself — may, however, be contrasted with others, unavoidable we fear when human nature is so sorely tried, and when sufferings like these produce on the contrary a cruel selfishness. Once a General Officer, worn out with fatigue, had fallen down on the road, and a soldier passing by began to pull off his boots. The General faintly gasped forth the request to wait at least till he was dead before he was despoiled. "*Mon Général*," answered the soldier, "I would with all my heart, but if I do not take your boots, the next comer will, and therefore they may as well be mine." And so he continued to pull!

Another day an officer of the Engineers was also lying prostrate and exhausted. Seeing some soldiers pass, he called out to them for aid and told them who he was. "And are you really an officer of the Engineers?" said the soldiers stopping. "I am, indeed, my friends," answered the officer, hopeful of their succour from their words. "Well, then, go on with your

plans!" rejoined one of the soldiers in mockery, and they all marched on.

Amidst such scenes and sights of woe the retreat proceeded. The Emperor reached Molodetschno on the 31 of December. There he dictated and despatched that famous bulletin — the 29th in number since the commencement of the campaign — which lifted at least in some degree the veil from the horrors of the retreat, and which, as published in the "*Moniteur*" of the 17th of December, diffused deep gloom in almost every family of France, since there was scarcely one perhaps unconnected in kindred or in friendship with some soldier, now most probably perished, of the *Grande Armée*. But besides this general grief, another and as strong a feeling was excited by the following words with which the bulletin concludes: "*La santé de Sa Majesté n'a jamais été meilleure*." This phrase was introduced, as we believe, without any ill-feeling and in defiance as it were to the strokes of adverse fortune; but it was commonly taken as evincing the insensibility of the writer to the sufferings which he beheld on every side around him, and which he in fact had caused.

This touch of the national feeling has not been left unnoticed by those Siamese twins of authorship, or rather, according to Colman's line —

"Like two single gentlemen rolled into one," —

Erekmann and Chatrian. In their justly popular "*Conscrit*" they describe the talk as it may have passed among the peasants in the market-place at Phalsburg, when the 29th bulletin was read: —

"Les cris et les gémissements se firent entendre... Il est vrai que l'affiche ajoutait: *La santé de Sa Majesté n'a jamais été meilleure*; et c'était une grande consolation. Malheureusement cela ne pouvait pas rendre la vie aux trois cent mille hommes enterrés dans la neige."

Another phrase in this bulletin was understood in a similar sense. It says that in this retreat the men whom Nature had endowed with superior powers still preserved their gaiety. Gaiety amidst such scenes! M. de Narbonne, who had attended the Emperor from Moscow to Smorgoni, and held the rank of his senior aide-de-camp, was thought to be foremost among the very few for whom this singular compliment was designed. When some weeks afterwards M. de Narbonne returned to Paris, one of his young friends (M. Villemain) addressed to him a question on the subject.

"Were I to live thirty years longer," so writes M. Villemain in 1854, "I should never forget his keen look of displeasure as he answered, *Ah, l'Empereur peut tout dire; mais gaieté est bien fort!* And he turned aside, shedding some tears at the horrors he remembered but too well."

From Molodetschno, where this far-famed bulletin was written, the Emperor proceeded on the second day to Smorgoni, a small town still three marches from Wilna. Arriving on the afternoon of the 5th of December, he immediately summoned a council of war, which comprised Murat, Eugene, and the Marshals. To these he imparted the design, upon which his mind had brooded for some days past, to quit the army and to proceed with the utmost secrecy and also with the utmost despatch to Paris. His return to his capital almost simultaneously with the news of his disaster would strike a salutary awe into his ill-wishers both at home and abroad, and above all would maintain the — perhaps already wavering — alliance of the German Princes. At Paris also he could direct the new levies which would be requisite with the greatest promptitude and vigour, and might return in three months at the head of 300,000 men.

These were certainly, as M. Thiers admits, very powerful reasons; and yet, as the same historian proceeds to urge, there were also considerations of much weight to adduce on the opposite side. It is true that the *Grande Armée* — a term that now, alas! had become almost an irony — had dwindled, even including the Guard, to 12,000 soldiers able to bear arms, and to a mass of some 40,000 straggling and disbanded men. But if Napoleon had determined to hold fast by this ruin and to make a stand at Wilna, he would there have received some considerable reinforcements already on their march, and near at hand to join him. He might have strengthened himself with his two wings, the corps of Macdonald from the north, and of Regnier from the south; and he might further have called to his aid from the same quarters the Prussians, under York, and the Austrians, under Schwarzenberg; both of whom would certainly at that period have obeyed his call. Thus, as M. Thiers proceeds to show in some detail, he might have mustered a force fully equal to any the Russians could at the juncture in question have brought against him. There was also the proud feeling of adhering, as the commander, to an army which, under his command, had suffered the direst extremities of war.

It is remarkable that the only two familiars whose advice was sought by Napoleon before the Council at Smorgoni — namely, the Duke de Bassano and Count Daru, the former being consulted by letter, and the second by word of mouth — both strongly urged the Emperor to remain. They alleged that the ruin of the army would become complete and irretrievable in the event of his departure; that, on the other hand, the conspiracy of Malet had left no traces in France, and that the Emperor's orders for the new armaments which he needed would be obeyed as implicitly from Wilna as from the Tuileries.

These arguments, however, did not move the Emperor from his settled design. Of the chiefs assembled at Smorgoni, Napoleon asked no counsel; he merely apprised them of his will. He had resolved to name as Vicegerent in his absence Murat, King of Naples, the highest among them in rank, though certainly not in knowledge and ability. Having announced to them his intentions, and explained his motives, he exhorted them to unity and concord; then embracing them one by one, he bade them farewell, and set out on his journey the same evening.

The suite selected by the Emperor on this occasion consisted only of Caulaincourt (with whom he sat alone in the first carriage), Duroc, Lobau, and Lefebvre Desmouettes, the Mamaluke Roustan, a *valet de chambre*, two *valets de pied*, and one *piqueur*. Beside these, there was also a young Polish officer, Count Wonsowicz, who would be of special service as interpreter during the first part of the journey. And here we would direct attention to a small booklet, "*Itinéraire de Napoléon de Smorgoni à Paris*," which was published at Paris in 1862, but which, as we imagine, has scarcely, if at all, reached England. It is edited by a veteran French diplomatist, Baron Paul de Bourgoing, but in fact consists of the notes which M. de Bourgoing received from Wonsowicz. This interesting little volume supplies us with some facts not hitherto known.

In commencing this journey, Count Wonsowicz and the *piqueur* went first, as explorers, in a *traineau*; at a little distance the Emperor and his remaining suite followed in three carriages. Up to the first stage, the little town of Oszmiana, they were escorted by thirty *Chasseurs à cheval de la Garde*. It was known from the outset that the expedition would be dangerous, from the swarms of Cossacks and detachments of the enemy's troops who might be in advance. But the peril proved to be much greater

than had been foreseen. When the rapid *traineau* dashed into Oszmiana at past midnight, Wonsowicz was surprised to see the small French garrison, comprising three squadrons of Polish lancers, drawn up in battle order on the public square; there was, they said, a Russian force in front of them, and almost in sight; they had been attacked the day before, and expected to be attacked again. The General in command declared that there would be the greatest rashness in proceeding.

In about an hour's time Napoleon in his turn drove up, and was found to be fast asleep in his carriage; he was awakened by Wonsowicz and told the unwelcome news. He then got down and eagerly unfolded his map of Lithuania. All the chiefs in attendance pressed him to pause in the face of such imminent hazards, and wait at least till daybreak. But Napoleon, with truer wisdom, saw that promptitude alone could save him. Even a short delay might reveal the secret of his journey and quicken his enemy's pursuit. He found, moreover, that his small party need not proceed without some protection. He might take with him as an escort to the next relay, or so long as their horses' strength endured, the three squadrons of Polish lancers, amounting to 266 men. Therefore, after a few minutes' reflection, he beckoned Count Wonsowicz to his side, and spoke to him as follows:—

“ Les Lanciers Polonais sont-ils prêts ? ”

“ Oui, Sire; ils étaient tous là avant notre arrivée. ”

“ Qu'ils montent à cheval. Il faut disposer l'escorte autour des voitures. Nous allons partir sur-le-champ; la nuit est suffisamment obscure pour que les Russes ne nous voient pas. D'ailleurs il faut toujours compter sur sa fortune; sur le bonheur: sans cela on n'arrive jamais à rien. ”

As a further measure called for by this terrible crisis, Napoleon ordered Count Wonsowicz and General Lefebvre to mount the box of his own carriage; and confiding to them a pair of pistols which he drew forth readily loaded, he addressed to them these words, —

“ Dans le cas d'un danger certain, tuez moi plutôt que de me laisser prendre. ”

Deeply moved, Count Wonsowicz, having first asked the Emperor's permission, translated these words aloud to the Polish lancers. He was answered by a cry of enthusiasm. These gallant men declared that they would let themselves be cut to pieces sooner than

allow the Emperor to be taken, or even approached.

In this guise, at two in the morning, the journey was resumed. Scarcely were they out of Oszmiana when there shone forth, and above all to the left of the road, the watchfires of the Russian troops. The call of their sentinels was also distinctly heard. But the night was most intensely cold, the thermometer at twenty-eight degrees of Réaumur below zero, and, as Napoleon had foreseen, the Cossacks, couched close to their blazing logs, were reluctant to leave them in quest of an uncertain prey. Moreover, though their watchfires were seen from afar, they might themselves not distinctly see the long dark line of the carriages and horsemen which without light was wending along. In this manner the convoy, bearing Caesar and his fortunes, passed without being assailed.

But that night of almost Siberian cold proved fatal to many of the Polish lancers. In attempting to keep pace with the carriages, their horses would slip and come down on the icy ground, frequently with broken limbs or severe wounds to the riders. Too many of these gallant men are thought to have evinced their devotion to their chief by the forfeit of their lives. When in the morning the convoy reached the relay of Rownopol, it was found that of 226 lancers who had started from Oszmiana, no more than thirty-six remained. At Rownopol, their place as escort was supplied by some fifty cavalry of the Neapolitan Royal Guard. These also suffered severely from the frost; their commander, the Duke de Rocca Romana, losing some fingers of both hands.

On arriving at Wilna, Napoleon did not enter the city, but remained for concealment in a small house of the suburb. He was thus enabled to confer for some hours with his trusted Minister, the Duke de Bassano, before he resumed his journey. At Wilna his danger from the Russians had much diminished; at Kowno and beyond the Niemen it altogether ceased. By day and night, over snow and ice, the journey was still pursued. There was only now and then a halt for meals. Such was the speed, and so frequent on the other hand the break-down of the rickety vehicles, that Napoleon left behind the greater part of his suite, which did not rejoin him till at Paris. Thus he dashed into Warsaw one afternoon with only a single carriage. Great was the amazement of the Abbé de Pradt, the French Ambassador in the Polish capital, at suddenly seeing Caulaincourt appear before him and summon him to the presence

of his sovereign at l' *Hôtel d'Angleterre*. There he found Napoleon just arrived, pacing up and down a narrow room, while a servant-girl on her knees before the fire was trying in vain to blow up a flame from the damp and half-green wood. In a book published but two or three years later, M. de Pradt has given, perhaps with some exaggeration, a full account of this remarkable interview. According to him, Napoleon at each interval of the conversation repeated over and again the following phrase, since become so familiar to France: "*Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas!*"

At Dresden also there was a like scene, when at three in the morning Count Wonsowicz roused the good old King from his slumbers and invited him to pay a visit to the Emperor in the *Pirna Strasse*. The whole of that little Court, as Count Wonsowicz assures us, was not a little flurried at this strange event.

"Le Roi se levant au milieu de la nuit à la requête d'un inconnu, armé et vêtu d'un costume singulier; le Roi disparaissant en chaise de louage sans dire à aucune des personnes de sa Cour où il allait; c'en était assez pour donner lieu à tous les commentaires, aux plus vives inquiétudes. La Reine de Saxe, sœur du Roi Maximilien de Bavière, princesse déjà avancée en âge, fut effrayée au point d'avoir une attaque de nerfs."

Much to the same effect was the surprise in the first town within the French territory, namely, Mayence. Count Wonsowicz was again despatched with a like message to Marshal Kellerman, Duke de Valmy; and we will leave him to relate in his own words the curious conversation that ensued:—

"Lorsque l'officier Polonais arriva chez le Maréchal, il trouva ses appartements splendidement éclairés; toute la société de Mayence y était rassemblée pour un grand bal. Le Maréchal Kellerman fut appelé; mais il reçut très durement celui qui se disait envoyé par l'Empereur. Il le prit d'abord pour un porteur de fausses nouvelles.

'Je ne vous connais pas,' lui dit-il; 'et je vais vous faire fusiller comme un imposteur.'

'Vous en aurez toujours le temps, Monsieur le Maréchal,' répondit sans s'émouvoir l'officier Polonais; 'mais avant d'en venir là, veuillez vous assurer de la vérité de ce que je vous annonce.'

'Comment,' reprit le Maréchal, 'comment est-il possible que l'Empereur soit à Mayence, et que je n'ai pas été prévenu de son arrivée?'

'Veuillez aller le lui demander, Monsieur le Maréchal; moi je ne suis chargé que de vous annoncer son passage.'

Le costume très en désordre de l'envoyé Impérial avait au premier abord indisposé le Gouverneur. Il n'y voyait qu'un déguisement pour le tromper. Il se rendit enfin, et partit pour aller trouver l'Empereur, tout en faisant garder à vue le Comte Wonsowicz, ne lui permettant de communiquer avec personne, et l'emmenant avec lui, flanqué de deux gendarmes. Mais cet incident et cette méprise furent de courte durée.

L'Empereur, voyant arriver le Duc de Valmy, lui dit, après quelques phrases très affectueuses:

'Mon armée est perdue en grande partie; mais soyez tranquille, d'ici à quelques mois j'aurai sous mes ordres huit cent mille baïonnettes, et je prouverai à mes ennemis que les éléments seuls pouvaient nous vaincre. J'ai eu tort, je l'avoue, d'exposer mes pauvres soldats à un climat pareil. Mais qui ne fait pas de fautes en ce monde? Quand on les reconnaît il faut tâcher de les réparer.'

In proceeding onwards, even through his own dominions, the Emperor maintained the same incognito. On the 18th, when he expected to reach Paris, he stopped to dine at Château Thierry; and there also *il fit une grande toilette afin de se présenter convenablement à l'Impératrice*. But his mischances were not yet at an end. Some miles further his carriage broke down, and Napoleon had to enter *une de ces disgracieuses voitures de voyage à deux immenses roues et à brancard, qu'on nommait alors une chaise de poste*. At Meaux it was found that the sum assigned for the travelling expenses had come to an end. The Emperor, the Duke de Vicence, the Count Wonsowicz and the Mameluke Roustan, who since Warsaw had formed the entire party, gave what money they had about them, but the total amounted to less than eighty francs. The Duke de Vicence could only apply to the post-master for an advance, which fortunately was not refused him.

At half-past eleven the same night the rustic vehicle—*cet affreux équipage* as Count Wonsowicz terms it—appeared at the *Grille du Carrousel*. Naturally enough it was denied admittance. But Count Wonsowicz, dismounting, led the officer on guard close to the carriage-window.

"L'officier de garde reconnut son Souverain, et s'inclina avec une profonde émotion. La grille s'ouvrit alors. On peut se figurer quelle sensation produisit dans le palais des Tuileries cette arrivée inespérée. L'Empereur, une fois entré dans le château, défendit expressément qu'on fit aucun bruit qui pût éveiller l'Impératrice; il se rendit sur-le-champ à son appartement."

In this guise then did he, so lately the conqueror and arbiter of Europe, re-enter his palace, and resume the government of his empire. The account of his disasters, as comprised in the 29th bulletin, had been published by the "Moniteur" only the day before.

If we ask the effects produced by the departure of Napoleon on the melancholy remnant of his troops, which continued its retreat from Smorgoni to Wilna, we shall find them described by M. de Fezensac in few but expressive words:—

"Dans la situation de l'armée ce départ était pour elle une nouvelle calamité. L'opinion que l'on avait du génie de l'Empereur donnait de la confiance; la crainte qu'il inspirait retenait dans le devoir. Après son départ chacun fit à sa tête; et les ordres que donna le Roi de Naples ne servirent qu'à compromettre son autorité."

Murat, indeed, could not direct; and under such a chief the Marshals would not obey. The large and rich city of Wilna, the ancient capital of Lithuania, had been looked to by the suffering soldiers as the probable term of their calamities. They counted every step, says M. de Fezensac, that brought them nearer to this long-desired haven of rest. But, alas, how empty the hope, how evanescent the dream! How sharply were they roused from their illusion, the last to which they clung, when they appeared before Wilna, in part on the 8th, and in part on the 9th of December! Expected though they were, no due measures had been taken for their reception and relief. Rushing up pell-mell as they came to the narrow gateway, there was soon an amount of obstruction and confusion comparable to that on the Beresina bridges. Yet while the multitudes were thus pressing on each other with cries and yells, with bruises and with blows, while, in fact, great numbers had to remain the whole night without the city—there were all the while, to the right and left, open gaps through the walls, which no one had been stationed to point out!

Within the city it was much the same. There were ample magazines, both of provisions and of clothing, but no order had been made for their right use. The perishing soldiers would not be denied, and thus, for lack of distribution, there was plunder. Moreover it was found that the city could not be maintained. Several divisions of the hostile army were close at hand, and the sound of their artillery boomed

nearer and nearer. Under these circumstances Murat made a precipitate retreat, at four in the morning, with the remains of the Old Guard. In his hurry he appears to have given no directions for the guidance of the rest. Marshal Mortier heard of his departure only by chance, and then followed with the Young Guard, or what was left of it. Marshal Ney, with a handful of heroic men, again forming the rear, undertook to maintain the city a few hours more. Immediately on his departure the Russian troops poured in. Of the French, several Generals, a great number of officers, and more than twenty thousand soldiers, nearly all sick or wounded, remained at Wilna, utterly exhausted and unable to move farther. They became, therefore, prisoners in the enemy's hands.

The ruin of the army, however, was completed a few miles from Wilna, at a steep hill forming the left bank of the Wilna valley. That hill had become one slippery sheet of ice. The horses—for there were still some horses undevoured—were urged to drag up the remaining cannon or carriages, but they were urged in vain. Not one piece of artillery, and scarce any of the lighter vehicles, could be saved. Here, then, were relinquished the last resources of the army, its military chests, carried from Wilna, and containing ten millions of francs in gold and silver coin. The soldiers passing by were permitted to take what they could, and it was a strange spectacle, writes De Fezensac, to see men heavily laden with gold, and yet half-dead with hunger. Here, too, were left "the trophies of Moscow" as they were termed, which had been conveyed safely thus far amidst so many dangers and disasters—above all, the great cross of Ivan, taken down from the highest spire of Moscow, and designed in memorial of the conquest, for the ornament of the Invalides at Paris.

At Kowno, as at Wilna, no stand could be made. The French army, now reduced to scattered bands, fled, band by band, across the Niemen. There were now only hundreds of armed and effective men upon the same ground where there had been hundreds of thousands the summer before. At Königsberg they found a short respite, but no permanent halting-place until on the line of the Vistula—behind the ramparts of Dantzick and Elbing.

The aspect of Wilna and Kowno, just before they were thronged with the mass of the retreating French, is well portrayed in a book which has had but little circulation in Germany, and none at all, we believe,

in England. We allude to M. Droysen's biography of General York, published at Berlin in 1851. York, as is well known, was, at the close of 1812, commander of the Prussian force in Courland, which acted as an auxiliary to France, and had Marshal Macdonald as immediate chief. Perplexed at the ominous rumours which began to prevail as to the fate of the *Grande Armée*, York secretly despatched one of his young officers, Baron Canitz, on an exploring mission to Wilna. The memoir of the Baron, as drawn up on his return, now lies before us in its native German, being given by M. Droysen in the appendix to his first volume; and we are here tempted to translate, and sometimes abridge, several of its graphic details:—

"On the afternoon of the 4th of December I reached Kowno. Till then I had met scarce any one upon my route, and seen no traces of the war. But at Kowno the ruins of demolished houses, the remains of bivouac fires, and the dead horses on the roadside, spoke but too plainly of an army's line of march. The town was full of scattered soldiers, many sick or wounded, derived from every possible corps, and decked with all varieties of uniform. The first of whom I asked my way to the post-station was a half-frozen Portuguese, who could speak of nothing but the cold. I found it almost impossible to obtain post-horses, but lighted, by good fortune, on a French courier charged with despatches, who offered to take me with him on my paying one half his expenses. I gladly accepted his proposal, and we were off in half an hour.

The places we passed through were half demolished, and the inhabitants had fled, so that besides the French soldiery there was no creature to be seen. A few miles from Kowno we overtook a body of some hundred cavalry—Cuirassiers and Lancers—proceeding as a reinforcement to the *Grande Armée*. The horses not being rough-shod were constantly slipping and falling on the icy ground. So the men had for the most part to proceed on foot, leading their steeds by the bridle, and expressing their dislike of this mode of march by a myriad of execrations. My courier called out without ceasing, '*A gauche, mes camarades; c'est un courier de l'Empereur qui doit passer;*' and in this manner we went through the devoted band, which, as I compute it, must have arrived at Wilna just in time to share in the general destruction.

Wilna, like most cities in Poland, is a strange assemblage of splendid palaces and miserable huts mingled with each other. Its streets bore a most variegated aspect, as comprising samples and specimens of all the different corps which had formed the *Grande Armée*. Still there was a certain order preserved; the Guards of the

King of Naples, who stood sentinels at the principal doors, were not only trim but splendid in attire; and there were only the ghastly figures of the *revenants des hôpitaux*, as they were termed, to remind us of the coming catastrophe. French ballets and comedies had been acted in the evening; and French shops were open in every direction, several for jewelry or other *articles de luxe*, and all with huge French signs.

From General Knesemark I learnt the latest news. He told me that according to his reports the French cavalry and artillery were utterly destroyed—that there was little hope of a stand being made at or near Wilna—that the Emperor was on the point of taking his departure, and committing the command to the King of Naples. It was to be the General's last day at Kowno. He had been summoned by the Duke de Bassano, in common with his brethren of the *corps diplomatique*, to proceed at once to Warsaw, so that he would not be able to judge with his own eyes of the retreating army.

In company with a friend, Major Schenk, whom I found at Wilna, I repaired to a *restaurateur*, at the sign of the *Aigle Impérial*—a visit of which I stood greatly in need, since meals do not abound in a Polish journey. Never, perhaps, did any cook deserve more thoroughly this name of *restaurateur*. How many men did I see come in who were feeble and famished, and to all appearance crestfallen and heart-broken, but who, after the long unwonted comfort of a good repast, could sally forth again with a firm step and a cheerful mien! Of those I spoke with, none made any secret of the enormous losses sustained on the retreat. But they expressed their belief that the Russian army was almost as much ruined as their own, and that no serious resistance would be offered to the attempt of erasing the retreat, and making a rally at Wilna.

This was on the 5th. On the morning of the 6th the agitation in the city was visibly increased; and all who could find a conveyance had set out. Our host of the *Aigle Impérial* was already gone. We went to another *restaurateur* to breakfast, at the sign of *La Couronne Impériale*. He, too, was packing up. Several officers represented to him that there was no sort of danger, and that he had better stay. '*On a des nouvelles très-consolantes de l'armée,*' answered he; '*je n'en doute pas, mais je partirai demain à la pointe du jour.*' Napoleon may perhaps have taken exactly the same view when he stepped into his carriage at Smorgoni, and bade the King of Naples lead his army into winter quarters.

All through the day I saw *revenants* from the army pour in. Forms so gaunt, so ghastly, that even the direst dream could scarcely image them, arrived in almost an unbroken line, some on sledges, and some on foot. Out of many hundreds, hardly one carried a musket or a weapon of any kind. Many fell down exhausted in the streets, and lay helpless, while

the rest passed them heedlessly by. To see a man dying, after so many other scenes of woe, seemed to produce no more impression than to see a man drunk in a Polish fair.

I was assured that the Guard was expected on the morrow — reduced to a mere handful, and marching in utter disarray; and I should have wished to judge with my own eyes the actual state of that proud band which I had beheld last June, in all its splendour, passing through my native land. But the officer at the post-station told me that he could give me no horses if I lingered; and so I set out on my return that very night."

In concluding the slight sketch of these terrible disasters it seems natural to inquire the total loss which the French sustained. M. Thiers computes that, of the soldiers who had crossed the Niemen, about 100,000 became prisoners of war, and about 300,000 were either slain in action or died of their wounds, or perished from famine and cold. Vast as are these numbers, they appear to be fully borne out by specific details. Thus M. de Fezensac gives us the particulars of his own regiment. It had 2150 men when it passed the Rhine, it received a reinforcement of 400 men at Moscow, one more to the same amount at Smolensk, and another of only 50 men at Wilna, making 3000 in all. "Now of these 3000 men," adds De Fezensac, "only 200 returned with me to the Vistula, and about 100 subsequently came back from captivity, so that our loss was 2700 out of 3000, that is nine-tenths." And even of these 200 who remained in arms upon the Vistula, how many may have belonged to the detachments that joined at Smolensk or at Wilna, and that never saw Moscow!

The causes of this great catastrophe are by no means difficult to trace. Of course the rigour of the season forms the first. But the closer we inquire, the more fully shall we find confirmed the opinion of the Duke of Wellington, which we quoted at the commencement of this article, that the arrangements of Napoleon were short-sighted and defective. That opinion will be found developed with more details, and fortified by numerous instances, in another essay or rather series of remarks by the Duke — some notes which he drew up in 1826 on M. de Ségur's recently published history of the Russian campaign. Those notes have hitherto remained in MS., but they will appear in the forthcoming volume of the "Wellington Papers," and meanwhile we have been enabled by the favour of the present Duke to peruse them in the *proofs*.

The Duke here observes: —

"This chapter (the second) affords another proof of Napoleon's extraordinary character. He had taken the utmost pains to ascertain the difficulty and danger of the enterprise which he was about to undertake; these difficulties and dangers are represented to him from all quarters and in all forms. He is sensible of them, yet he is determined to persevere. He wants a military success, and he must seek for it; he is blind to every difficulty, or rather will not see any; and will take no measures to ensure his success (excepting to collect a large French army), and most particularly none which can check for a moment the gratification of his hatred of Bernadotte.

It is certainly true that this young empire had all the disorders of old age. Here are officers making false reports, and a Minister concealing the truth, lest the truth should displease the Emperor!"

On the whole then, in discussing the events of 1812, we may presume to say that Napoleon had made no preparations for a military retreat. In his other campaigns, both before and after, that extraordinary man evinced a genius for the organisation of an army, little inferior to his genius in the field. It was far otherwise in the Moscow episode. There the Emperor appears to have confided in his star — to have supposed that his former course of uninterrupted triumphs must be uninterrupted still, even though he should neglect the provident care by which, among other qualities, these triumphs were achieved.

We would observe, however, as a fact that may explain — and not only explain but in a great measure excuse — his deficiency of arrangements at this time, that all through the advance from Witepsk to Moscow, and probably at Moscow also, Napoleon appears to have been in a state of feverish excitement and great mental disquietude. Of this curious fact there has recently appeared some remarkable testimony. Duroc, who during so long a period was admitted to his daily intercourse and familiar conversation, and who beyond all other men deserved the title of his personal friend, dotted down at the time, in great secrecy and only for himself, some notes upon the subject. Forty years later these notes, having come into the hands of M. Villemain, were published by him in the first part of his "*Souvenirs Contemporains*." We shall conclude this essay by transcribing them, thinking that they form perhaps a key to no small part of what ensued: —

"4 Août, deux heures du matin. A pris le bain: grande agitation. Il faut marcher, réparer vite le temps perdu; nous ne pouvons

pas bivouaquer éternellement dans cette bi-coque du palais du Duc de Wittemberg.

5 Août, une heure du matin. Dictée sur les mouvemens des corps. . . . Que servirait de prendre Riga ? Il faut une immense victoire, une bataille devant Moscou, une prise de Moscou, qui étonne le monde.

L'Empereur a dormi deux heures ; il m'a montré le jour déjà clair à l'horizon. 'Nous avons encore,' m'a-t-il dit, 'du beau temps pour près de atois mois ; il m'en a fallu moins pour Austerlitz et Tilsit.'

7 Août. L'Empereur a été physiquement très souffrant ; il a pris de l'opium préparé par Methivier. Duroc, il faut marcher ou mourir. Un Empereur meurt debout ; et alors il ne meurt point. Vous avez peur des Prussiens entre Moscou et la France : souvenez-vous d'Iéna, et croyez encore plus à leur crainte qu'à leur haine ; mais pour cela il faut marcher ; il faut agir. L'Empereur a souffert encore. Il faut finir cette fièvre du doute."

We may sum up the whole perhaps with a forcible exclamation of the Duke of Wellington, as we find it in his *Séjour* notes,—"It is that which strikes one as most extraordinary in the history of the transactions of our times—how much of the fate of the world depends upon the temper and passions of one man!"

From a correspondent of the *Spectator*.

BISHOP LONSDALE.

A MAN has been taken from the Episcopal Bench during the last week of whom we should like to say a few words. Dr. Lonsdale will not be remembered by any books that he wrote. He produced a Latin ode on the death of Pitt when he was fresh from Eaton ; he produced some apologetic works against Infidels when he was still possessed by the ordinary Eton notion that the main business of Churchmen as well as statesmen is to guard wickets or to bowl them down. But he happily discovered that there are better works for a man to indite than these, that a simple Christian life is a much better refutation of infidelity than any arguments. Whilst he was a preacher at Lincoln's Inn the lawyers especially admired him for assuming that they had had enough of pleas and replications during the week, and that on Sunday they would prefer to be addressed as men than as profess-

ional disputants. He was not a High Churchman, a Low Churchman, a Broad Churchman. Journalists who represent any of these factions may be expected to speak of him merely with cold respect.

Those who believe that a father in God is something better than a champion for any school, will remember him with warm affection, even if they had only slight and occasional opportunities of intercourse with him. No person of any party ever left him with the fancy that he had found, or made a convert to his opinions ; no person of any party ever left him without the feeling that he had met a just, kindly man, before whom he need not fear to expose his opinions, whatever they were. Those who were under him at King's College speak with cordial recollection of him as a most conscientious, painstaking, never troublesome or vexatious administrator ; those who had most experience of his government in the diocese over which he presided for twenty-three years will, we believe, be most eager to bear the same testimony. He never kept a suitor waiting or left a letter unanswered. Always pleasant and genial in society, and therefore evidently enjoying it, he never neglected a single disagreeable duty for the sake of it. He did not talk against men of the world, but he gave you the impression of being far more unworldly than those who were most profuse in such denunciations. He might discourse less ably on the grace of God than many, but there was an habitual graciousness in his words and acts which spoke, to those who saw it and who believed in a divine Spirit, of His abiding presence. There may be many more astute, more learned, and more eloquent prelates left than Bishop Lonsdale ; one more answering to the ideal of a spiritual father it might be difficult to find. A few minutes in his company did more to make one understand why an Episcopacy exists, and what influence it may still put forth, than all the pastorals and the resolutions of twenty Pan-Anglican Synods.

Let any one who wants to know how his ancestors cooked lobsters in A.D. 1381 read, "For to make a Lopister. He schal be rosted in his scalyss in a oryn, other by the Feer under a panne, and etyn wyth Veneger."

From *Il Diritto* — Florence : Democratic, Oct. 13.

FRANCE AND ITALY.

THE last hope which the defenders of the temporal power may have entertained has vanished. The clerical party in Italy and abroad eagerly put forward in favour of their own cause the inaction and apparent indifference of the citizens of Rome in the presence of the insurrectionary movement in the provinces.

The inaction of the Romans can be naturally explained — the concentration of the greater part of the Papal troops in the capital, the preparations made for a prompt and energetic repression of any outbreak in the city before it had time to be organized and reinforced, the difficulty of obtaining correct news respecting the nature and importance of the movement in the provinces, and the certainty of a speedy liberation; all these things are more than sufficient to explain the inaction and apparent indifference of the Roman citizens, fearful of compromising, at least for a certain time, the definite results by a rash and ill-considered movement.

It was useful to the clerical party to consider as real what was only apparent, and to make others believe so; it is true, however, that if this indifference, although only apparent, had been prolonged, there was danger that it would not only jeopardize the success of the present movement, but also — what would have been more fatal — it would have given the clerical party an opportunity of deceiving public opinion as to the true state of the Roman question.

This danger has now vanished, and the guarantee of it is the proclamation of the National Roman Committee.

The National Roman Committee which dissolved itself some time ago has now been revived, not in order to preach calmness and patience, but to give the signal for insurrection.

The proclamation of the National Committee states the question properly. The September treaty was concluded in order that a trial might be made of the vitality of the Papal Government; now the experiment is completed, and the result is a decisive condemnation of that Government.

The experiment therefore must cease, and if the September treaty still keep the Italian Government in a false position, it is the business of the Romans to free it, who neither signed nor accepted the Conven-

tion. Such is the substance of the proclamation, which, we repeat, is the signal of the insurrection.

This in itself is a decisive fact. The Roman question was put by the September treaty in these terms: Do the Romans wish or not to remain subject to the Papal rule? The Romans have replied: No. By this reply, which is now unanimous, both the question of principle and the legal question are solved. This reply by itself cancels the September treaty. . . .

Now it is not only the right but the duty of every Italian, of private individuals as well as of the Government, to turn to the speedy solution of the Roman question, and the completion of the national unity.

The bonds which diplomacy had imposed on us have fallen. Henceforth any delay would not only be fatal but unjustifiable in every respect.

Here is a record of a curiosity in literature, of which we as Englishmen may be proud. Some seven years ago it may be remembered a young Englishman, while a student at King's College, London, published a treatise written in the Turkish language entitled, "Ilm Tedbiri Mulk" (The Science of the Administration of the State), which was highly spoken of by Orientalists. We now learn that this treatise has penetrated into Turkey, that it has been seen in the hands of Turkish statesmen who praised its merits, and that it has been considered so useful that a Turkish paper, the *Muchbir*, has resolved to print and publish a second edition of it, and to present Mr. Charles Wells with 300 volumes as a token of the gratitude of the Turks for the service he has rendered to Turkey. The Oriental journalist highly eulogizes Mr. Charles Wells's treatise, and also his collection of Eastern Tales ("Me-hemet the Kurd, and Other Tales from Eastern Sources") lately published, and says there is no doubt that the Turkish Minister of Public Instruction will order the former work to be used in the Imperial schools and colleges. — *London Review*.

THE OCCUPATIONS OF A RETIRED LIFE.

BY EDWARD GARRETT.

A good report in the hamlet, or the little dorp of the good, is fame enough. — WHITLOCK.

INTRODUCTION.

THE LAST NIGHT IN THE CITY.

THERE are few things which it is altogether pleasant to do for "the last time." I daresay many brides feel a little heartache when they give their parents the evening kiss the night before the wedding. I think most clergymen would falter a little over a farewell sermon, though next Sunday they were to preach in an ancient cathedral instead of a little country church. And so my heart is not altogether merry as I draw my chair to mine ancient hearth for "the last time."

It is only a lonely hearth in the second floor of a great house of business. The room is rather low, but quite large enough for me; and it has one advantage which I have always appreciated: its windows overlook a narrow strip of graveyard belonging to a vanished London church. There is a great elm which touches my panes and makes a ghostly pattering when the wind is high. I wish the church were still there. One Sunday, its pastor preached in it for "the last time," only he did not know it; and in the week the red flames came, and withered it up before the eyes of the congregation. I have seen a picture of it, and it was a pretty Gothic church. If it were here to-day it would not have a score of worshippers. I should be one; or sometimes I might remain at home and listen to the anthem and the preacher's voice through my open windows.

I am an old man — I must be, for I have been in this very house, one way or another,

for fifty years. I entered as junior clerk — a very junior clerk, just fourteen years old, penniless and fatherless, and without home or friends in the great city. But a home was kept for me on the banks of the river Mallowe, — thanks to the courage and industry of my only sister Ruth. She was some years older than me; and when our father died she took his place, and ruled everything for our poor, crushed, feeble mother, with that quiet tenderness which belongs to strong characters. Ruth settled all about my situation, and then she prepared my little outfit, and at last accompanied me to meet the stage coach. Mother did not come further than our own gate. It was a very hot, bright summer-day, and the green lanes and fair meadows looked more tempting than I had ever seen them before. When we reached the corner of the common the coach had not come, and we stood beside the sign-post and talked. Ruth did not exhort me; she only told me in what parts of my trunk she had stowed away certain treasures; and at last, when a white cloud of dust in the distance announced the coming coach, she put her hand on my shoulder, and said —

"Now, Ned, never think you are free to go wrong because you fancy it won't hurt anybody but yourself. IT WILL. It will break up our home at Mallowe as much as if it depended on your support and you failed to send money. I shall not have heart to bustle about in the shop and among strange people unless I have cause to be proud of you, Ned."

And then she bent and kissed me, and stood there, smiling, while I climbed the

coach. She did not move as long as we were in sight; and very often during my first nights in London I dreamed of my sister standing alone by the sign-post on the broad common.

Yes, Ruth was a wonderful woman. When my father died, people advised that the shop should be given up and a school opened in its stead. That would be proper woman's work, they said, which the business was not. It would have been all very well had it been only the village library and stationery goods; but it was something beside. In or near our village were two solicitors, with large connections among the farmers and landed proprietors about, and my father kept in his shop all the requirements of their offices, and what was more, he undertook their copying. He had taught Ruth to help him, and she had been his only assistant, a fact over which there had been much shaking of heads among the old ladies. Of course she must give that up now, they remarked. Ruth said nothing at first, but when they pressed her very vigorously, recommending particular houses as suited for her visionary school, and even giving hints as to what furniture she should keep, and what she should sell, then she opened her mouth and spake.

"We know the worst of old things, but we can't guess the worst of new ones," she said. "So long as I can I shall keep what I have."

And so she did. The labors which she and her father had shared, she managed to do alone. God knows (I say it solemnly) how she did it. We had been orphans for a year before I left home, and her example during that time was a great boon to me. She was a living picture of self-denial, patience, and cheerful industry, all the more edifying because she did not see it herself, but was only a little proud of her success as a woman of business. I fear our mother never quite appreciated her. But Ruth will not let me say so. She always remarks, "Ah, Ned, there was nothing to appreciate; I am very glad that our mother kept me in mind of my faults." But then why was mother so blind to mine? — and I might have had many more, and worse ones, and I know she would have continued as blind. Dear mother! she has gone where she is doubtless grown strong enough to understand the daughter who puzzled her so sorely on earth.

London seemed very dismal to me when I alighted from the old "Highflyer." It set me down at the "Saracen's Head," and as I wandered out of the quaint inn yard, I

felt a strange sinking of heart. The great world around was so strong, and stern, and remorseless, and I so weak and lonely! It is not at first we can realise that the vast tide of humanity is composed of little individual waves, one not much stronger or swifter than another, and all, and each (such comfort in that *each!*) carried along by the pitiful hand of God, who remembers every face in the vast throng, whether fair or faded, and knows every heart, and understands all about each life! But at first we only feel the terror of our own littleness. Coming from sweet country villages, where we recognised every one we met, we shrink from the unheeding crowd, with their blank, regardless eyes.

I was duly installed in my humble duties in the counting-house of this establishment. I don't think I was very bright; but every one was kind, and ready enough to give a helping hand to the poor dazed lad from the country. To me they seemed very clever, those handsome, well-dressed, gaily-speaking young men, my superiors. I did not believe I should ever be competent to fill places like theirs. As I have said, they were very kind; but I knew they laughed at me, and would not care to converse about such things as I took interest in. For the first few days this great house was as lonely to me as the streets. But one fair, cool morning, I was told that "the master" had returned from his summer holiday, and wished to see me — little Ned Garrett, from Mal-lowe. This was the head of the firm, — the other partners had been wisely chosen from among his best and longest-trying clerks. I had never seen Mr. Lambert; but I knew his history — how he was the son of a far-descended fallen country family; how he put aside the prejudice of his rank and entered business life as humbly as myself; how, by God's blessing on his diligence, he succeeded, until at last he bought back the old family mansion, but still remained in business, because he could not bear to give up the influence which he used for good in London. I felt a little awe as I approached his room — this very chamber. It was Mr. Lambert's then; it has been Ned Garrett's since. To-morrow it will belong to somebody else.

He said very little to me. He was a tall, slender man, with a beautiful old face and long silver hair, — no less a gentleman because he was a merchant. He sat in a great brown leather settle, behind a huge writing-table, and he bade me be seated on a little cane chair opposite. He asked if I had heard from home since my arrival,

and how were my mother and sister — "your sister Ruth," he called her, and the sound of the old household name was like a breath of the breezes that blow over the sunny Mallowe. Then he said he had heard good reports of me, and he should always like to hear the same, and stretched forth his hand — a white, warm, wrinkled, aged hand — and shook mine kindly, and I knew I might go.

But after that I never felt alone. I generally saw him once or twice a day, only for a minute, and quite in the way of business; but that always sent me back to work comforted and content. The great millionaire — the man who had declined royal honours — could not hold conversation with such a unit as me, as he might have done had he himself been an old clerk with two hundred a year, and a wife and children in a six-roomed house at Clapham. The tide of life breaks into streams, the boundaries of which it is not wise nor pleasant often to overflow. But the very character of the man was a friend to me. From it I could imagine the counsel he would give, and that it would be but an echo of the brave womanly words I had heard under the sign-post on Mallowe Common. I put the image of the quiet old gentleman into my heart beside that of my dark-eyed, accurate sister. They were the *lares* of my soul. I did not know all this when I was fourteen, but I know it now.

Well, I prospered, and rose one step after another, and when I was twenty-one I was in receipt of a fair salary for that age. Early every autumn I took a run down to Mallowe, but not at Christmas, because in those times we had no holiday then but the one day. I never wanted a better change than to go home. Early autumn was a slack time in the shop, so Ruth was free to roam the country with me, and many pleasant rambles we had, sometimes together and sometimes with young people from the village, whom I had known all my life. Ah, not even in London had I forgotten one — little Lucy Weston. I shall not speak about Lucy's looks; I don't suppose she was a beauty to any one but me, and I don't suppose she was clever. She was only a good little girl — a daisy among women; and we always love the daisies most, because we knew them best when we were young! Her father kept the Meadow Farm, a dear old-fashioned, gabled house, overgrown with creepers, which wreathed round its quaint white-curtained lattices, and made the whole place like a huge nest. Lucy was the only daughter; but she had

five brothers, great curly-haired, grinning, tramping, good-natured lads, who came crushing round me to hear about London, until, not having grown much since I first left Mallowe, I always felt quite overwhelmed and breathless. Yet, Lucy was a very quiet thing in manner, and voice, and look. Just to see her was as soothing as to hear an old psalm tune sung softly by little children.

I have not got a vivid memory, but any minute that I like I can fancy myself in the great parlour at Meadow Farm, a long low wainscoted room, with some curious wood-carving about the ceiling and fireplace, and wide windows along one side, beyond which lay a splendid prospect of lane, and field, and hedgerow, mingling summer charms with autumn wealth. The floor was bare except for two narrow strips of plain green carpeting, which set off the cleanness of the boards. There were heavy old chairs with cushions of some kind of chintz, and a long well-polished oak table uncovered, except when clad in white drapery for meals. The room boasted no ornaments beyond a fox's head and brush, and a few firearms over the mantelpiece, and three great beau-pots of flowers, one set in each window. And what a noise the farmer and his sons made, as they came tramping in, with loud honest laughter, and good old jokes that could stand an airing almost every day, and among them little Lucy with the breezes in her hair, and her cheeks a wee bit redder from the family kisses! And last of all, "the mistresses," with her cambric cap and kerchief, and her broad sunshiny face, that looked as if it remembered all the good harvests and forgot every bad one. And then after them came tea and cake and fresh fruit, borne in by a stout serving-maiden full of old-school deference to her superiors, but always able to throw back a saucy word to the boys, if necessary. And then we all gathered round the long table, Lucy and I, somehow, side by side, and after a moment's hush, there burst forth the Westons' customary tea-time grace — Lucy's silver voice rising among the others, like a minstrel's harp amid the clang of martial music,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

After such a meal as that, on the last night of my visit in the year of my coming of age, Lucy and I wandered out upon the

greeny downs behind the house. I was a little disposed to envy the easy course of life in that nest-like home, and I manifested this tendency by setting forth, somewhat vauntingly, the advantages of city life. Perhaps I did it to hide my discontent, perhaps to argue myself into satisfaction with my lot. But Lucy went straight to the root of the matter. "There's a 'best side' to everything, Ned," she said, "and there's much to be gained by living in London, but because we grant that, don't let us cry down country life. I'm rather sorry your favourite Mr. Lambert thinks there is so much more to be done among the houses than under the trees. I wish he would come down here and try."

"But life in the country is so narrow," said I.

She looked at me and smiled. "No one can do more than he can, Ned," she answered; "and the narrowest life is wider than most of our hearts. When people have a great many ways of doing good, they sometimes get so confused that they do nothing."

I knew she was right.

"So you have made up your mind never to return to the fields 'for good,'" she remarked after a short silence.

"I don't say that," I answered. (We were standing on a slight eminence, facing the sunset.) "I daresay you would refuse to live in the city."

"I don't think I should," she replied, shading her eyes; "it would all depend upon circumstances."

"I shall not be able to afford to live in the country till I am quite old," I said — "perhaps not then."

"Well, everywhere is God's world," she answered, turning towards me; then added playfully, "but when you do come, don't make up your mind there's nothing to do but water flowers and go to sleep. There's plenty of work wherever there are sin and sorrow; and sin and sorrow are everywhere. 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few:'" and her voice was solemn then.

Ah, pretty Lucy! at the harvest supper some will meet us whom their father called into the shelter of his own house before the burden and heat of the day!

"Dear me, but I'm grown quite a cockney," I said, after a long pause. "If I am to live in the country again, I shall want some one to show me how."

"You can easily find some one," she retorted.

"Will you?" I asked.

But at that auspicious moment we heard Farmer Weston's lusty voice shouting our names, and Lucy sprang up with damask cheeks, and ran fleetly to the house. I did not see her alone again all the evening. But next morning as I passed the farm, on my way to meet the coach, I saw her toying with her beau-pots in the parlour. So I unfastened the wicket, and crossed the garden, meaning to ask for an answer to my question. But the moment I reached the window, Mrs. Weston advanced from the recesses of the room, and overwhelmed me with good wishes for my journey, and an enormous cake and some ripe pears wherewith to beguile its tedium. So perforce I returned to my city abode with an unsatisfied heart.

After a fortnight (scarcely a fortnight — I think it was only ten days) came the accustomed budget from Ruth. It opened with a bulletin of my mother's failing health, and good news of the business, but the third page went on thus: —

"It has been a sorrowful week at Mallowe. Our dear Lucy Weston was taken suddenly ill on Tuesday afternoon. She was unconscious from that time, so no one was sent for, not even her grandmother, and on Wednesday night she died. I know you will be so sorry."

That was all. My sister passed to other topics.

Of course I went as usual to business, but I felt myself worse than useless. The long rows of figures meant nothing to me, and I was blundering on, with flushed, throbbing face, when Mr. Lambert came in.

"You are not well to-day, Garrett," he said, in his soft, modulated tones.

"Not quite, sir," I replied.

He looked kindly at me for a moment. "Have you heard from home?" he asked.

"All well there, I hope?"

"All quite well, thank you, sir," I answered.

He sat down opposite me, and wrote a letter. I could feel his eyes upon me now and then. When he had finished, he spoke again: —

"Leave off work to-day, my boy, and take a drive out of town. You're worrying about something — I shan't ask you what. I don't believe it's your fault, so it will be sure to come right again, Garrett." And once more he shook hands with me — the second time since I had been in his house.

I did as he bade me. And I returned, not comforted, but calmed, and strong enough to bear my sorrow. Comfort came by-and-by, but not completely — not till I

had been through a simoom of misery which was destined to teach me that I and my first love had been parted by the best and kindest separation which God can ordain.

Ah, Lucy, and it cannot be many more years before I shall hear you singing again; this time a better Doxology than the one in which I can always hear your voice to this very day. I have never forgotten you! Looking upon my life, people might say I did forget, and not too slowly; but where you are, perhaps you know better.

I sent an ordinary condoling message to the bereaved family, and then I settled into my old life, and in due course the time came round for my accustomed visit to Mallowe. I half thought I would not go, but I forced myself not to flinch. I found everything exactly the same. I thought Ruth gave me one or two searching glances, but that was all. I believe it was only my fancy.

"You will go to Meadow Farm this evening, Ned," she said, after tea; "you always gave them the first visit, and they might feel hurt if you didn't now, poor things."

"I shall certainly go," I answered, looking from the window. "Shall you come too, Ruth?"

"I think not," she said. "I am rather busy, so I will stay at home, and then I shall be ready to take a walk with you to-morrow."

The Meadow Farm looked as nest-like as ever, and the beau-pots were still in the windows. But the flowers missed the dainty fingers which had arranged them so well, and they looked faint and drooping. I entered the open door; the house was very silent, but presently one of the brothers, crossing the back garden, caught sight of me, and came forward to bid me welcome. He was as yellow-haired and ruddy as ever, but his step seemed quieter — perhaps it had grown hushed while *she* lay in her coffin. He led me to his parents. The father was laughing and chatting as usual, but his voice and laugh were those of an old man. The mother's face was as sunshiny, but not so broad. They were seated in their great orderly kitchen. Mrs. Weston explained "that they felt the parlour chilly of an evening; they liked to be where the fire was." The five brothers came in and sat down in a half-circle. Presently the mother spoke about "her Lucy," and her husband joined in. They both shed a tear or two. The eldest brother shaded his face, as from the firelight; another got up and looked into the garden; a third asked if the horse were put up for the night, and then went to the stable to satisfy him-

self. It was very touching. They were evidently trying to pursue their life as cheerfully as possible, but they could not make it what it had been. I stayed to supper. The elder brother stood up, and offered "thanks." There was no singing. "We could not do it at first," said the poor father; "it was nothing but breaking down, and so we got out of the habit."

That visit did me good: the sight of their cheerful resignation braced my own soul, and I returned to London, stronger and happier than I had been since my last country visit.

After that, several years went quietly past. I advanced in the office, until I was fairly a well-to-do man, and though still but a salaried clerk, not without private dreams of ultimate partnership. At last, when I was nearly thirty years old, I found myself constantly a guest in the home of a fellow-clerk — a young man, who lived with his widowed mother and a sister. Their small neat house at Hackney was very different to great rambling liberal Meadow Farm, and the occupants were as dissimilar. Yet, I believe competent judges would have considered Maria Willoughby much more handsome and talented than the little daisy at Mallowe. Of course, Maria was a town-lady, quiet, polite, and self-contained — a conservatory exotic; while the other was just a little flower, dropped from God's hand, and untouched by horticulturists. But I grew to love Maria — not with such love as I had borne for *her*, but with grave, reverent affection, which would have placed her "in my home and near my heart," and kept her there safe and honoured even to the end. In due time, I opened my suit; it was courteously received, and I believed myself happy in a sensible, middle-aged kind of way.

Well, I don't want to say much about what followed. Let this suffice. Here am I, Ned Garrett, a settled old bachelor, and there is Maria the wife of a wealthy City man, the son of a long line of prosperous merchants. If she had come to me and said, "I love this man — I loved him before I knew you;" or, "I see him for the first time, but I know that I can love him as I can never love you," I could have forgiven her and forgotten my own loss and humiliation. But no! Only her mother wrote to me, saying Maria had received a proposal from a gentleman who could offer her a comfortable establishment and handsome settlements; and as I could do neither, she had advised her daughter to act in a way most conducive to the well-being of all parties, and

Maria had been prudent enough to consent. Do you suppose I was satisfied with this? Not I. I insisted on seeing the girl and making sure there were no underhand dealings or false representations. But she only confirmed Mrs. Willoughby's letter; and I don't know what I said, nor how I looked, but both women quailed before me, and I have never spoken to either since.

I think that would have cost me my faith in womanhood, had Maria been my first love. It was then I learned to thank God for Lucy's grave—for the gentle Hand that had not shattered my idol, but only removed it to a place of eternal safety. And from that time my heart has never yearned for a new allegiance. The bitterness slowly wore away, together with the remembrance of her who caused it. I know that Maria was pretty, graceful, and refined; but her face never comes to me in sleeping or waking dreams—while as for Lucy's, I could draw her portrait directly, if my fingers had as good a memory as my heart!

Not long after that I got my partnership. It was but a sober triumph for me. I wrote a letter to my mother and sister, and then walked out in the darkness alone. There was no one else to tell. I knew Maria Willoughby would hear the news from her brother, and I blushed at the coarse pleasure I felt at her possible mortification, for I was now in the way to become a much richer man than her intended spouse. Oh, if she had only stood the ordeal! Yet even then I did not wish my success had come earlier and spared her the trial. One would rather go without jewels than pass through life decked out with pinchbeck, in the fond belief that the glass and gilt were diamonds and gold. We may regret the baseness, but not the detection. Let all false things go!

Not very long after that my dear gentle mother died. She had been so long ailing that she slipped out of life almost unconsciously; and I am glad to remember that her last word was Ruth's name. After the funeral I remained at home many days, assisting my sister in her final arrangements. Had everything been realized, there would have been a slender competency for her, and I wished her to share my London home, and rest herself for the first time in her life. But she resolutely refused. She would live in the old house and carry on the business, aided now by the orphan daughter of our village doctor. "When I'm an old woman and you're an old man, Ned," she said, "then we will live together if we choose, but not before. You might

wish me away if I came. Now, don't exclaim. I should be glad if something happened that would make you wish me away. Shall you never marry, Ned?"

I laughed, and told her, as she was the elder, I was waiting her example.

"Don't talk nonsense," she said, giving an energetic snip to some stuff she was cutting out. And there the matter ended.

But now, after many years, the time is come when Ruth is content to rest assured I shall never need a fresher face than hers for my *vis-a-vis*. For I find the long rows of figures dazzle me, and the new-fashioned ways of business confound my old-fashioned mind. And I also long for green fields, such as that where I talked to Lucy more than forty years ago; and to fortify this failing and yearning, I have argued with myself that it is almost a sin for an out-of-date old fellow like me to keep on grinding and moiling for more gold, which I shall never need for wife or bairns, thus filling a post which might be better occupied by some clever young man with both. So we two mean to live and die together in a quiet country corner; and this very day I have said good-bye to all my clerks, and left some remembrance in the hand of each, just as Mr. Lambert did, thirty years ago, when he came among us for the last time only the week before he died; and I patted the head of a curly-haired lad from Glasgow, the very image of Ned Garrett fifty years ago, and I have told him if he ever want a friend not to forget his old master, buried in a certain snug cottage, where I know even now Ruth is passing about the rooms to see that all is in apple-pie order for my arrival to-morrow.

Yes, I, the old merchant, mean to rest for the remainder of my days. Yet, at the same time, I remember *her* charge, that in the quietest life "there's more to do than water flowers and go to sleep." Ruth will help out my slow comprehension with her keen eyes and clear voice. I only wish there had been a touch of romance about her. It would have made her as perfect as mortals can be. But romance is always sorrow. Therefore, I thank God for my sister's escape.

Now for one more star-lit gaze from my narrow window! To night I see the dim moonbeams over the graveyard of the vanished church, and so far as silence goes, I might be on Snowdon, instead of in the heart of London city; but I know that almost within a stone's throw of my window nestle courts and closes where infamy need never hide its head, even in such pol-

luted daylight as can enter there. I know, too, that in some of the giant houses round me toil men whom the world respects and honours, but whom God ranks with those other felons who snatch watches to buy bread they are too cowardly to earn. And I own that Lucy's words are true; this vineyard has been too large for me. My heart has not been strong enough for its burden. I have done a little, or rather I have helped others to do it, but it is such a little that I have no temptation to stand where the Pharisee stood, and boast of my good deeds.

To-morrow night I expect to look out on a far different scene — on quiet meadows with great hills rising behind them. Perhaps I shall hear the nightingale below my windows, and the lights will all be out in the few cottages within ken, just as if each were an abode of domestic peace and love. But I must not forget my Lucy's words — "There's plenty of work where there are sin and sorrow, and sin and sorrow are everywhere."

Yes; God has brought me thus far on my way, and I can trust Him to guide me to the end. He never gave me one sorrow or one pang more than I needed. I find now that the days which were hardest to live through are not darkest to remember. I only wish I had known this at the time, for I was often haunted by a dreary picture of lonely old age brooding over memory of sorrow as painful to endure as sorrow itself. It was my own fault. I should have trusted God's promises. It is rather late to begin to have faith, when one is on the brink of the cold river, and can almost see the gleaming gates beyond. But God is very reluctant to say "Too late."

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST DAY IN THE HOUSE ON THE HILL.

I LEFT London at dawn, and arrived here before noon. My new home is not at Mallore, but a little higher up the country, within an easy drive of that dear old place. This afternoon I have taken a fresh survey of my premises, and I am as well satisfied as on the day I bought them, for I am not one to like a thing less after it has become my own.

The house stands on a hill, gradually rising from the river side. Between the trees, by the use of a field glass, I can catch a glimpse of the Mallows, like a silver thread

wandering on a greeny robe. Valleys are very beautiful, with their wealth of vegetation, and their well-like coolness; but I prefer the hill-tops. I think a valley is like youth, a lovely place to saunter for a while, but where we do not wish to stay, and where we could not stay even if we would. I don't say we never wish ourselves back again, for many hill-sides are very bare and dreary. But age is like a bower near the summit, whence we can see the path by which we came, and from which many things which seemed ugly when we passed them, look beautiful in the distance. And from that resting-place we can survey the little bit of journey which still lies before us, and we see that it is very easy and very short. I know age is generally called "the descent of the hill." What! go down to rest amidst the dampness, and chills, and mists, that always haunt valleys? No, no!

A narrow scarcely-used road, running between hedges, passes our front door. It leads direct from our nearest village, or rather attempt at a village, for I saw scarcely a dozen houses as I drove through it. But there are a few great farms standing back from this road, and enlivening it with their sweet sights and sounds. One in particular seemed to come as near as possible to my typical homestead. The dwelling-house stood in a bend of the road, and a long, fair, dazzling flower-garden stretched before the white-curtained windows of the best rooms. At the back lay the farm buildings, loading the air with scents of hay and new milk, and stretching about, as such buildings do, in pleasant places where ground-rents are unknown. A great curly dog stood at the stable door and looked at me reflectively, as if he knew I was a new neighbour whose acquaintance he must soon make. All around stretched broad meadows, rejoicing under the warmth of God's hand. I could not resist alighting from my chaise, and leaning over the hedge. Suddenly I heard a horse's step in the path behind it, and a middle-aged man rode up mounted on a stout cob. He wore light garments and a brown straw hat, and he looked full at me as he passed. I almost think he muttered. I am afraid he grudged my enjoyment of his possessions, for as he left the field, he shut the gate with a sharp bang, and rode on to the house. The sight of his face spoiled my pleasure. He reminded me of an old spelling-book picture of "the dog in the manger." I began to pity the women who lived in that beautiful house, with no glimpse of the outer world except what he brought home to them. I looked

compassionately at an old labourer who was carting some soil, an ancient man, with that patient pathetic look which comes upon the aged when at work. I feared he never got a single penny more than what he could legally claim for his poor failing toil. But, anyhow, he at least knew of another Master, for as I passed I heard him singing in a queer cracked voice —

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green: he leadeth me
The quiet waters by."

There he paused to raise another shovel-full and then went on to the last verse, as if it and the first dwelt specially in his mind —

"Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me:
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling place shall be."

I was struck by the Scotch version and accent in an English lane. A few yards off, a young man was mending a gate, and from the likeness I concluded he was son, or more likely grandson, to the cheerful patriarch. But he was not singing either psalm or ballad. His face was quite gloomy — a handsome face, with noble features, such as one rarely sees except in the highest or lowest ranks. He could not be more than nineteen. Ah, you see I am right. The old man was near the hill-top, and in the brightness, but the lad was under the shadows of the valley.

Another twist in the road brought me to my own gate. So that surly farmer is our nearest neighbour. Well, I hope I got a wrong impression of him. Perhaps, before this day week, I shall be sorry for my judgment. I hope so! I hope so!

Ruth was waiting at the wicket, and I wish a painter had been with me to immortalize the scene — the little red-brick house standing against the warm greens of very early autumn, the bright geraniums in the foreground, the solid pillars of the entrance, relieved by their snowy stone globes, and my sister in her black satin gown, with a lace cap on her head, and a cambric kerchief fastened about her throat by the one heir-loom of our family, a little diamond brooch presented to our great grandmother by the famous Duke of Marlborough when he was *fêted* in some town where her husband chanced to be mayor. Two prim serving-maidens stood in the background

waiting to do me honour, and I could hear the deep bay of a house-dog in the rear. Their decorous faces broke into smiles when I entered, as if something in my countenance promised to relax the reins of domestic discipline. Oh, Edward Garrett, why are you not dignified! You and your sister have both been business-people till now; you have made a fortune, and she but an independency, yet she looks quite a *grand dame*, and you! do you look like a gentleman of fortune? Go and see yourself in the glass, and be humble: your house, and your sister, and all that is yours, are far too fine for you, old fellow. Go and hide your diminished head!

Then we had our dinner, and we ate it in the sunshine, at the open window. Perhaps it was this, and Ruth's company, which made it so much nicer than my chop or steak yonder in the city. We were attended by a neat-handed Phillis. That is not a quotation. The girl is really a Phillis — Phillis Watts, a ploughman's daughter, who has doubtless derived her fanciful cognomen from some relative on whom it had been bestowed by a sentimental fine-lady god-mother. The other servant came in to help her to remove the dishes, and not thinking it right that I, her future master, should sit by in perfect silence, I inquired her name, and was answered in a quiet, refined voice —

"Alice McCallum, sir."

The tone made me observe her more closely. She is a slight girl, with brown, waving hair, pushed very clearly off her brow. Her face looked pale and worn beside the ruddy Phillis. There was nothing striking in the features, but much in their expression, more particularly when seen in a country-servant. Presently she removed the cloth and withdrew.

"That is a Scottish lass," said Ruth, "and a very superior girl."

"Has she a brother and a grandfather?" I asked, "for I saw two Scotchmen on my road here."

"She has some male relatives who work at the farm below," answered Ruth, taking up her knitting.

"Have you learned much about our new sphere, Ruth?" I ventured to inquire after a little pause, for she had already resided here nearly a month.

"Really, I have not troubled myself about any sphere outside these rooms, Edward," she replied; "they have kept my hands full until now."

"You have certainly arranged them

admirably," I said, looking round. It was no compliment. I never saw better appointed chambers.

By-and-by I brought out this, my notebook, and began to write. Ruth's knitting needles clicked awfully fast. I know she thought me trifling.

"Is that your correspondence, Edward?" she inquired, in that cool voice of hers, which always makes me feel so deferential.

"No; I'm only writing about—about"—

"Your sphere, eh, Edward?" and the voice was cooler still.

"Well, yes," I answered, growing desperate, "and yours too, Ruth."

"You needn't trouble yourself about mine," she said. "'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' That's all the sphere I care about, Ned."

"That is just what I wish to illustrate," I explained.

"The words are plain enough as they stand," said she.

"Yet, Ruth, many seem to read them, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth *not* to do, fancy thyself doing it with all thy might.'"

"They are fools," she answered, decidedly.

"So are all of us," I remarked, "in one way or another;" and then followed a long silence.

"Nevertheless, Ned," my sister began, in her softer manner, "I own even the wisest take long in learning that there is no better work for them than the bit God puts into their hands. I know I have often neglected some duties, because it was out of my power to perform others."

I could hardly restrain a smile to hear her use her own shortcomings as proof of the weakness of "the wisest." But I knew it meant no harm. It was only a habit she had acquired through being the sole responsible person in the old home at Mallowe.

"And, Ruth," I answered, "there are also people who perform the far-off duties before those near at hand."

"Ah, yes," said she, "like the young woman who could play the piano, but had not learned the use of a tumbler."

"And there are still others," I went on, "who yearn after blessings they cannot get, and undervalue those they have."

"Ah, feelings are different to deeds," she said. "To them we can scarcely say 'I will' or 'I will not.'"

"I think God will help us through our yearnings for what he withholds," I remarked; "but he will surely punish our under-

valuing what he gives, perhaps by making us realise that old school-book line—

'How blessings brighten as they take their flight.'

And speaking of school-books, reminds me that many people will not learn what they may, because they cannot learn what they would, not knowing that the path of possibility often guides safely through the maze of improbability; and they seldom find out their error till too late."

"Yes, truly," assented Ruth, clenching my meanderings with a proverb:—

"He who will not when he may,
When he will, he shall have nay."

And then she rose and went off about some household arrangement, leaving me to puzzle out a few more thoughts on the wisdom of doing first the thing which lieth nearest.

But it would not do. The silent beauty of the prospect stretching far before my windows wooed me from my papers, and after a few ineffectual attempts at perseverance, I put them aside, got my hat (oh joy! not a dingy beaver, but a cool, light straw), and sauntered out. Now, it's just like me to want to know more about what I know already. So, instead of turning to the left and taking the road I had never seen, I turned to the right and pursued the path along which I had travelled at noon. It was cooler now. The sun was getting low; and the shadows were broader and darker. Very soon I came in sight of the great farm, with its outlying houses. The young workman was still lingering by the gate, which was now mended, and beside him stood a slight figure in white cap and apron. As I drew near I recognised the pale face of my servant, Alice McCallum. She turned and acknowledged my presence.

"A fine afternoon, Alice," I said. "Do you know, when I saw you at dinner, I fancied I had met relations of yours in the morning, and I suppose I am right."

"This is my brother Ewen, sir," she answered.

"And you have a grandfather too?" I went on. "I heard him singing the Scotch psalms as I passed."

"Ah, he is always cheerful, sir," she said, and I thought her lips quivered a little.

"Has he gone to his tea?" I inquired, looking round, for he was not in sight.

"No," said the young man. "He's just inside yonder tool-house."

The words were civil enough, though rather abrupt, but the voice startled me. Like his sister's, it was a refined voice, yet there was in it a harsh tone of defiance, as if he were ready to direct me anywhere, so as it took me away from him. I looked at the girl. Her eyes were fixed on her brother's face, with an expression of mingled pity and terror. There was something in her countenance which made my heart ache.

"I will go and speak to your grandfather, Alice," I said.

As I drew near the tool-house, the old man came out. Seeing me approach him, and recognising the traveller of the morning, he gave me a sort of half-military salutation, and stood still.

"I find your grand-daughter Alice is one of my household," I said. "She does not seem a very strong girl; but our service will not be hard."

"Alice is quite content, sir," answered the old man cheerfully.

"Were your grandchildren born in England?" I inquired.

"The boy was; Alice wasn't," replied the patriarch. "Alice was born in the Highlands of Scotland. She says she can just remember the place; but I doubt, sir, that's more from my talk than from her memory. Ah, I see it as if I'd only left it yesterday—awee!—I don't say it was bonnier than this, nor so bonnie maybe," and he looked round, "but for a' that, sir, to auld folk there's nae place like the auld place."

"What made you leave it?" I asked.

"Ye may well believe, no o' my ain will," said he, "but the Earl, to whose forefathers mine had paid honest rent for a hundred years, took it into his head to make a great sheep farm. So we had notice to quit. Not us only, sir. More than thirty homes were broken up on the same day. One or two hearts were broken, too, I'm feared. Yet the Earl was a kind man, sir, and had never been hard after a bad season. I suppose he didn't know people could care for old walls that had no 'scutcheons on them. I don't doubt he did it never thinking. But that didn't save our sorrow."

"Was there any resistance?"

"No, sir; there were a few fierce words at first, but we understood well enoo' that the Earl could do as he willed wi' his own. And if his agents were kind-hearted folk, why should we make their work painfu' tae them? And if they were cruel, why should we resist what we couldna' withstand, and gie them the pleasure o' conquerin', as they were sure to do? We don't like being

conquered, sir; if we can't keep a field, we leave it."

"And what became of the evicted people?" I asked.

"They mostly went to Canada. All those I've heard of, have prospered. If the Earl ever frets about the few old people who were sent to their graves a little before their time, he may comfort himself wi' the thocht it was a good change for the many in the long run. That's the way the Lord brings good out of evil, sir."

"Your family didn't go abroad?" I queried.

"No, sir," he said. "I had only one son, and his wife was a poor ailing creature, who would have died on shipboard. Yet she had a wonderfu' spirit: there was no one said harder things of the Earl than she did. At the same time, sir, if she could have shown him a kindness, I'm sure she'd hae done it. So, instead of going abroad, we came down here, and my son got a place as manager on a farm, and we all did very well, only the wife died when little Ewen was born. My son lived till both his children were 'most grown up. We have had hard lines, sir, since then, but I'm glad he died when he did."

"Why, how is that?" I inquired.

"Ah, sir, it's a terrible story, and might be better untold. But you seem kind, sir, and however you may judge about the boy, what I can tell will help you to understand Alice."

"Your grand-daughter certainly looks unhappy, Mr. McCallum," said I.

"She's just witherin' up," said the old man, with a strange pathos of solemn calmness.

During our conversation we had strolled down the lane past the farmhouse, and as McCallum spoke thus, he paused beside a rude fencing which enclosed a low-lying woody meadow, through which ran a narrow stream.

"It happened there!" he said.

But Alice came running behind us, quite white and breathless. "Grandfather," she cried, "Ewen is waiting for you to go to tea. You know he must make haste back to finish his work," and as she spoke she gave an appealing look, as if she only wished she knew what was told and what remained unsaid.

"I'll come—I'm comin'," answered the old man, with a humility like that of a child detected in some indiscretion. "Mind, sir," he whispered, "it has nothing to do with her, except that it's hurrying her away to be an angel in heaven."

We retraced our steps very slowly, for the old man was unmistakably feeble. Alice walked by his side in silence. We found Ewen waiting for us where we had left him. Their home lay down a narrow lane, leading from the road. I caught a glimpse of it — a rude wooden cottage, with bulging windows.

"I have put your tea ready, grandfather," said Alice.

"Thank ye, my girl; and I'm sure, sir, we're kindly obliged to Mistress Garrett for giving her leave to run out whiles, and do us a turn at housekeeping. Good evening, sir."

"Good evening, Mr. McCallum," I answered; "good evening," I added, turning to the young man, but he walked away as if he had not heard.

Alice stepped before me and opened the garden gate. She held it while I passed in. Then she said timidly, "Don't think hardly of my brother, sir. His manner is strange, but he has been through seas of trouble."

"Is he quite ashore now, Alice?" I inquired.

She did not answer for a minute, but her lip and brow quivered. "I'm afraid, sir, it's as right as it ever will be," she said, and burst into tears.

"My dear girl," I began, "I don't want to hear anything you do not wish to tell, but" —

"You'll hear it all soon enough, sir," she said, with a desperate effort to stop her tears; "but I wanted you to know us a little before you heard."

"Yet, would it not be best for you to tell me your own story? Why should I be left to hear what other people say?"

"Then I've got no story to tell, sir," she answered with sudden calmness. "The only story is what the people say, and they say a lie!"

There was a clear emphasis in her voice which made me look down at her. Her tears were dried, and her eyes were bright and fixed, like those of a person fronting a railing mob.

"Then I should not heed them, Alice."

"Yes, sir, you would," she replied. Her flat contradiction was quite respectful. She saw life from a position in which I had never stood. She was the wisest in this matter.

By this time we had reached the hall. I held out my hand to her, as Mr. Lambert had given me his on the day I heard of Lucy's death.

"Well, at least, Alice," I said, "remem-

ber, I am ready to hear whenever you wish to tell. Do not be too sure that a friend's aid is useless."

She let her hand stay in mine for about a minute. It was very cold. Then she raised her eyes and opened her mouth, so that I saw rather than heard her thanks.

I went into the parlour. My papers still lay about the table, and Ruth had not returned. I wondered if she knew anything of the tragedy of which I had caught a glimpse. I resolved not to ask her about it yet, for I believed she had a practical person's strong dislike to mystery. And what was this mystery? It seemed connected with that handsome, abrupt young workman, scarcely more than a youth. His sister denied its truth, whatever it might be, but I knew that loving women have a happy gift of disbelieving what they choose. Her grandfather had certainly spoken less decidedly; and I could not forget his words as we stood beside that low, deserted meadow, with its sluggish stream. "It happened there." What happened?

It pained me greatly to see the suffering written on my servant's face. When she brought in our tea she was as composed as possible; but I had been behind the scenes, and I knew there was a reason for her worn cheeks, and for the strange note that sounded occasionally in her voice. Yet what could I do to help her? It occurred to me, I might find an opportunity of speaking to the young man alone. I know some people suffer from a strange reserve, which makes them more willing to open their hearts to strangers than to their dearest friends. This arises from a morbid sensitiveness which cannot bear constantly to meet eyes that understand all about us. Now this disposition ought not to be punished or preached at. It is a spiritual disease, and must be pitied and cured. At the same time, I doubt if it ever wholly disappears. To this day, I am glad Ruth never guessed about Lucy Weston.

After tea, my sister resumed her knitting, and as I fumbled with my papers, I caught her dark eyes watching me with an arch expression. Presently she said —

"How did you like your afternoon walk, Edward? Had you any adventures?"

"Hem — no" — I answered, guiltily; "at least, I met Alice in the lane, talking to her brother and grandfather. The old man seems a shrewd, pleasant Scotchman, and he sent his thanks to you for permitting Alice to look after his household arrangements."

"Ah, poor man! I should think myself

a hard woman if I denied him any comfort in my power to give," said Ruth.

"Any special reason for saying so?" I inquired.

"I believe the young man is as bad as he can be," returned my sister. "There's one very dark story whispered about him in the neighbourhood. He was tried for a fearful deed and acquitted. So, of course, human eyes must henceforth regard him as innocent. I'll not repeat the story, for I don't know any particulars."

"I gathered something of this from their talk in the afternoon," I said. "At any rate, his sister believes him guiltless."

"She's one of those women who are made to be heart-broken," remarked Ruth; "she'd not love him less if she knew him guilty."

"Thank God for such love," I said. "It helps us to understand His own."

"Yes, that's all very fine," returned my sister, "but it seems hard one should be a martyr that others may learn a lesson."

"Yet it is often God's will," said I.

"Well, Edward," she answered, "I don't suppose He wishes it, but as He permits it, of course we must be satisfied. He will make it up to the sufferers in His own good time."

"He makes it up now," I said. "Love is ever its own reward. It purifies the heart which holds it."

"So does fire purify silver," retorted Ruth, "but I doubt if the silver likes the process while it is going on."

"Yet I am sure Alice would not give up her sisterly love even if she could," I pleaded.

"Ah, she can't give it up, so that settles the question," returned Ruth. "There is no laying down the crosses that grow out of our own hearts, and they are always heaviest!"

"The heaviest cross makes the brightest crown," I said.

"I suppose so," she answered. "But when one is over tired with carrying a burden on a long journey, one has not always strength to look forward to the very end. The little bit of road under each footstep is often quite enough!"

"Just so," I said, "and so doing, we shall suddenly find ourselves on the threshold of Home!"

Then followed a long silence. At last I asked, "From what service did you take Alice McCallum?"

"From Mallowe Hall," answered Ruth. "I knew her by her coming to my old shop, and I always had a liking for her. She was

lady's maid there, and she left because all the servants took sides against her brother, and that she could not bear. Besides she wished to be nearer her relations in their 'trouble,' as she called it. So I offered to take her, and she was quite thankful to come, though our service is much inferior to what she left at the Hall. I told her plainly she was a simpleton. But she only answered 'Never mind.'"

"Well, Ruth," I said, "I am truly thankful you acted as you did. Few women would have courage to engage a servant who expressly wished to be near a relation with 'a very dark story.'"

"I am not in the habit of judging individuals by their connections," she answered, "and I liked the girl's faithfulness. Besides, for the matter of fear, I may as well tell you I keep pistols."

"Bless me, Ruth!" I ejaculated.

"Well," said she coolly, turning her needles, and beginning another row. "Better do that, than not do what you wish because you're frightened."

"When did you begin that custom?" I inquired.

"Twenty years ago," she answered; "at the time when I hired a youth to be messenger and odd man about the house and garden at Mallowe."

"Then you took two or three means of protection at the same time," I said.

"I didn't know whether the lad would be a protection," she replied drily. "He had been a convict, and he hung about the village, saying he could not do anything, because no one would give him a chance. I resolved he should not have that excuse any longer. So I rode to Hopleigh and bought two pistols, and took some lessons in their use. Then I hired him, and he slept in the room over mine. He never knew about the firearms. He thought I trusted him entirely. I think it was a harmless deception. Had he shown himself unworthy of trust he would have found out his mistake."

"Then you were not disappointed in him?"

"No," she said, "he is now highly respectable, and is head man on one of the best farms near the village."

"Ruth," said I, gazing earnestly at her, as she sat opposite me, as upright as a dart, "you never told me this before."

"Why should I?" she replied, returning my gaze with a sharp glance from her keen hazel eyes. "You would have urged me not to do it, or not to do such things again, as the case might be. And yet I'll engage

you've been doing the like in London. We're all willing to be a little brave or kind ourselves, but we're prone to wish our friends to shut themselves into safe, selfish cupboards, just to save our own feelings and fears."

"Well, Ruth," I said (thinking this was a good opportunity), "I've come to the conclusion I'll have a little conversation with young Ewen McCallum myself."

"Very well," she replied, "only you need not speak to him beside pools in lonely fields."

"But supposing the best opportunity occurs in such a locality?" I said, smiling.

"I cannot get into you to direct your conscience," she answered. "But don't follow my example in everything *except* the pistols!"

At that moment Phillis brought in our supper, and our conversation fell into very ordinary channels, until we finally said good night, and retired to our respective chambers.

I wonder if Ruth has really had no romance in her life. I am not so sure of it as I was last night. She is certainly like some

apples I have seen, which have green, tart rinds, yet are very sweet at the core. But if God has ever sent my sister one of those special sorrows with which "a stranger intermeddleth not," she must have suffered very much, as such strong natures do. They always shut their sorrows in their own hearts, which is very like covering a crown of thorns with an iron helmet. God bless her! I almost wish she had been born to rank and wealth—she seems just the woman to save a country, like Joan of Arc, or Elizabeth, or Maria Theresa.

Yet, after all, but few are needed to do these out-of-the-way tasks which startle the world, and one may be most useful just doing common-place duties and leaving the issue with God. And when it is all over, and our feet will run no more, and our hands are helpless, and we have scarcely strength to murmur a last prayer, then we shall see that instead of needing a larger field, we have left untilled many corners of our single acre, and that none of it is fit for our Master's eye, were it not for the softening shadow of the Cross.

CATES'S BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY.*

LAST year saw the completion of the best biographical dictionary which has ever yet been published in any country. The "Nouvelle Biographie Générale," published by MM. Firmin Didot, under the superintendence of Dr. Hoefer, was commenced in 1855, and thus eleven years elapsed between the issuing of its first and its last parts. It contains forty-six large volumes, printed in double columns, and therefore is able to afford to each name of importance a fair share of its text. The articles are carefully written, and it is altogether a highly creditable performance. Previous to its appearance, the well-known "Biographie Univer-

selle" occupied the first place among biographical dictionaries, the French appearing to have a special talent for works of this nature. England has never been particularly distinguished for works of reference of this class, the dictionary by Chalmers, although it occupies thirty-two volumes, being very far from satisfactory as far as regards completeness; as is likewise the case with the otherwise exceedingly valuable biographical section of Mr. Charles Knight's "English Cyclopædia." In the former, men of letters occupy an undue share of space, in the latter it is often very difficult to find out on what principle the selection of names has been made, very exhaustive articles having been written upon some comparatively unimportant individuals, while others who seem to have merited a better fate have been altogether omitted, or treated with undue curtness.

* A Dictionary of General Biography; with a Classified and Chronological Index of the Principal Names. Edited by W. L. R. Cates. London: Longmans.

In many cases, indeed, it seems as if more attention had been paid to the position of the biographer than to that of the subject of his memoir. Some years ago the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge made an attempt to bring out a really complete and satisfactory biographical dictionary. All due preparations were completed, a staff of ready writers secured, and the superintendence of the work placed in the able hands of Mr. George Long, the excellent editor of the "Penny Cyclopædia." But after publishing a number of volumes, and only arriving at the end of the letter A, the speculation was found to be of anything but a paying nature, and so, after an unsuccessful attempt to induce Parliament to vote a sum of money sufficient to defray the expenses of its publication, it was finally abandoned. The biographical dictionary just published by the Messrs. Longmans, under the editorship of Mr. Cates, is a very useful and creditable work. Being in one volume only it cannot of course pretend to anything like general completeness, or to minuteness of detail. But it contains a very great number of short memoirs, and they have, as a general rule, been so contrived as to give considerable information in a small space. Care has been taken, also, to prevent some of the persons commemorated from jostling others out of their fair share of standing-room. Mr. Cates has done his work conscientiously, and the publishers have made the volume not only a handsome one, but, what is of more importance, one which can be consulted without injury to the eyes.

The previous edition of the Dictionary was printed in letters small enough to drive any one but an ophthalmist frantic. On the whole, it is a work which may be safely recommended, and which every one who stands in need of biographical assistance, would do well to keep beside him. There is one peculiarity about it to which we cannot help calling attention. The name of its original projector and compiler is altogether ignored on its titlepage and in its preface. It is true that Mr. Cates tells us it is "based on the thirteenth edition of the well-known 'Treasury of Biography,' which,

as reconstructed, revised, and very greatly enlarged by myself, was substantially a new work," but he omits to tell us to whom the credit belongs of having made that Treasury available to the public. It is true, moreover, that a memoir of the original compiler has been inserted in the body of the book; but we think it would have been at least a graceful tribute to his memory if his name had been given a place on the titlepage of a work to the authorship of which he can put in no small claim. It may be as well for us to supply the omission.

It was in 1838 that the first edition appeared of the "Biographical Treasury," a work intended by its author, Samuel Maunder, to form a companion to his "Treasury of Knowledge." Both of these works soon became exceedingly popular, as also were the "Treasury of History," the "Universal Class Book," and the various other books of a similar nature which this indefatigable compiler produced. In addition to the labours they involved, he undertook a considerable share of the task of bringing out the well-known catechisms drawn up by his brother-in-law, William Pinnock. Indeed, his share in them was the larger of the two, though to Pinnock belongs the honour of their original design. Pinnock, it is well known, in spite of the large profits which his works brought in, ended by ruining himself, but Maunder would have nothing to do with his brother-in-law's wild schemes, and kept steadily on in his own limited, though highly useful, sphere of work, until his death, which took place in the year 1849. His "Treasury of Biography" went through edition after edition, the thirteenth of which was published last year under the editorship of Mr. Cates, who did much to alter and to improve it. Its main defect, in the form it then wore, was the painful minuteness of its type. Now it appears in all the glories of a "library edition," and the only fault we have to find with it is that which we have just mentioned, the omission of its original compiler's name. After all, the titlepage of this book is Samuel Maunder's best tombstone. He is fairly entitled to be mentioned upon it.